

On the Problem of Smallholding Soldiers in Late Byzantium

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From a fiscal point of view, there were three basic types of soldiers in Byzantium during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries: the mercenary, whose pay consisted primarily of direct grants of cash; the pronioia soldier, who received a conditional, technically non-bequeathable grant of fiscal revenues derived from specific properties and paroikos households, along with certain rights to rents on some properties and to the labor services of the paroikoi he was assigned;¹ and a third type of soldier, usually viewed as someone who held a more or less direct grant of land as compensation for or on condition of military service. In modern scholarship this last warrior is known by several names: the settled soldier, the peasant soldier, the enrolled soldier, or the smallholding soldier. Whatever label is employed, he has been regarded as essentially distinct from the pronioia soldier, who generally had a much higher social position and only an indirect connection to the land from which his income was derived, and from the mercenary, who had no inherent connection to land. The purpose of this paper is to discuss the difficulties involved in identifying what I shall call the "smallholding soldier," to point out indisputable examples of such soldiers in late Byzantium, and, finally, to define the smallholding soldier and consider the utility of the institution and its possible variations.²

¹On pronioia, and military pronioiars in particular, see the bibliographical references in J. Haldon, "Limnos, Monastic Holdings and the Byzantine State: Ca. 1261–1453," in A. Bryer and H. Lowry, ed., *Continuity and Change in Late Byzantine and Early Ottoman Society* (Birmingham, Eng.-Washington, D.C., 1986), 167 note 10, and in M. Bartusis, "The Kavallarioi of Byzantium," *Speculum* 63 (1988), 344 note 9.

²Inasmuch as I am restricting myself to the late period, I will be ignoring the problem of the middle Byzantine military lands. For this subject, see J. Haldon, *Recruitment and Conscription in the Byzantine Army c. 550–950: A Study on the Origins of the Stratotika Ktemata* (Vienna, 1979).

A number of obstacles complicate the task of identifying concrete examples of smallholding soldiers. The sources rarely speak of this type of soldier, and the historians, in particular, generally convey the impression that money and pronioia were the only normal ways of remunerating soldiers during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Consider George Pachymeres' description of the state of the army in Anatolia in the early years of the fourteenth century: "Not only were the Roman forces weakened, but having lost their pronioiai, they fled hastily from the east to the west, keeping only their lives; it was impossible to install others with fixed salaries."³ John Kantakouzenos makes the same distinction between mercenaries and pronioiars, though he prefers to refer to the latter as those soldiers that received προσόδους ἐκ χωρῶν, that is, "income [or revenue] from lands [or estates, villages]," as when he refers to "the mercenaries of the army and the strongest of those having incomes from lands" (τὸ μισθοφορικὸν τῆς στρατιᾶς καὶ τῶν ἐκ χωρῶν τὰς προσόδους ἔχόντων τοὺς δυνατωτέρους).⁴ Nikephoros Gregoras makes the same bifurcated distinction when he writes that in 1327 Andronikos III promised "to those serving as soldiers means of incomes and in-

³*Georgii Pachymeris de Michaelis et Andronico Palaeologis*, ed. I. Bekker, 2 vols. (Bonn, 1835), II, 389.10–13 (hereafter Pachymeres, Bonn ed.).

⁴*Ioannis Cantacuzeni eximperatoris historiarum libri IV*, ed. L. Schopen and B. Niebuhr, 3 vols. (Bonn, 1828–32), II, 81.15–16 (hereafter Kantakouzenos); also I, 287.18 ff, and II, 175.3–7. P. Mutařčiev, "Vojniški zemi i vojnici v Vizantija prez XIII–XIV v.," *Spisanie na Bŭlg. Akad. na nauk.* 27 (1923), 1–113, repr. in Mutařčiev, *Izbrani proizvedenija* (Sofia, 1973), I, 525–26, 530, and 547. Other passages speaking of pronioia as "incomes": Kantakouzenos, I, 119.15–16; 169.17–18; 443; 457.13–14; II, 63.12–22; 367.19–20; 476.7; and *Nicephori Gregorae byzantina historia*, ed. L. Schopen, 3 vols. (Bonn, 1829–55), I, 300.12–14; 438.6–7 (hereafter Gregoras). N. Oikonomidēs, "A propos des armées des premiers Paléologues et des compagnies de soldats," *TM* 8 (1981), 353.

creases of salary" (τοῖς δὲ στρατευομένοις πόρους προσδόντων καὶ μισθῶν ἐπιδόσεις).⁵

Certainly the most direct approach for identifying soldiers that were neither pronoiars nor mercenaries is to look for evidence of grants of "land" to soldiers (as opposed to revenues or cash), but the customary absence of precise terminology in the narrative sources often makes it difficult to distinguish grants of land to smallholding soldiers from grants of revenues from land to pronoiar soldiers. This is much more troublesome than differentiating smallholding soldiers and mercenaries, because both the smallholding soldier and the pronoiar had by definition an attachment to land. In one instance, Gregoras reports that during 1341 Kantakouzenos refurbished the military by distributing "properties" (*ktēmata*) to the whole soldiery. While this may sound like a land distribution, Gregoras in fact was speaking of Kantakouzenos' *exisōsis* of military pronoiar, the well-known Patrikiotes episode, which according to Kantakouzenos involved "incomes" (*prosodoi*) rather than "properties."⁶ Documentary sources, for their part, are inherently somewhat more precise, but they present their own difficulties. Typically, we read that a certain soldier held land, but it is not always clear whether he did so as a pronoiar or as a smallholding soldier, or, for that matter, whether the land he held had any connection to his military vocation whatsoever. Special care must also be taken to be sure that the subject of any particular case is really soldiers at all.

Consequently, when a particular text is vague, it has often been all too easy to construct an interpretation involving smallholding soldiers, while overlooking other interpretations that suit the facts no less adequately. A number of such texts have been cited by scholars to illustrate the existence of smallholding soldiers. Although the arguments offered have always been brief and, generally, have appeared in the course of expositions and arguments on related though different topics, most of the texts are so well known and often cited that it is

important to discuss them in some detail before presenting some concrete, indisputable examples of smallholding soldiers in late Byzantium. Of the following eight cases, it is not certain that the first four deal with soldiers at all, and while the latter four are certainly concerned with soldiers, the issue is not necessarily smallholding soldiers. I should emphasize that my purpose is not to prove that smallholding soldiers are not the subject of these texts, only that, in my opinion, because of the ambiguity of the evidence, it is possible to construct reasonable interpretations that do not involve smallholding soldiers. It is hoped that discussion of these texts will lead to more conclusive interpretations.

(1) The first text is Pachymeres' account of the so-called "akritai" of the Nikaian era. He writes that the Laskarides, in order to maintain the Eastern frontier, "turned to the mountains, securing [them] with many strong settlers from all over (τοῖς πανταχόθεν ἐποίκοις)." Somewhat later, faced with increasing Turkish pressure, they "did not leave those living on the mountains (τοὺς πρὸς τοῖς ὄρεσιν οἰκοῦντας) uncared for, who, not having an incentive to remain, were prepared to emigrate if anywhere enemies should attack somehow. . . . But they granted tax exemptions (*ateleiai*) to all, *pronoiai* to the more illustrious among them, and imperial letters to those with an enterprising spirit." In addition, "the proud men inhabiting the highlands (τὰς ἄκρας)" also received "daily imperial signs of friendship (καθημεριναῖς φιλοτησίαις βασιλικάς)," probably some kind of added premium in specie or in kind.⁷ As a result, their economic condition improved, and they were persuaded to remain.

The most commonly held opinion is that the highlanders of the Eastern frontier were smallholding soldiers who, in return for their military services in defending the frontier, were given some combination of land, tax exemption, some cash payments, and, in a few cases, pronoiar. G. Ostrogorsky wrote that "John Vatatzes parcelled out land on condition of military service" to "all the soldier-borderers," and "the local population of the border areas was used for the performance of *stratiōtikē* service." P. Charanis classified the highlanders under his rubric "enrolled soldiers." D. M.

⁵Gregoras, I, 397.11–12. Mutafčiev, "Vojniški," 526. Πόροι προσδόντων could conceivably refer to both income from pronoiar and direct produce from land (and hence denote, respectively, pronoiars and smallholding soldiers). There is in fact an example where the related word εἰσόδημα means agricultural produce in kind: F. Dölger, *Aus den Schatzkammern des Heiligen Berges* (Munich, 1948), no. 45–46, II, lines 13 f (hereafter *Schatzkammer*). On the whole, however, I think Gregoras' phrase, "means of (making) incomes," is such an oblique way of referring to "land" that it is unlikely he had smallholding soldiers in mind when he wrote the passage.

⁶Gregoras, II, 595; cf. Kantakouzenos, II, 58–63.

⁷*Georges Pachymères, Relations historiques*, ed. A. Failler, 2 vols. (Paris, 1984), I, 29, lines 16–17, 21–26; and 31, lines 15–17 (hereafter Pachymeres, ed. Failler) = Bonn ed., I, 16–17. See also Mutafčiev, "Vojniški," 595–96.

Nicol, for unknown reasons, speaks of two types of border soldiers: "soldiers native to the soil, whose families farmed their own land," and the "akritai," whom he defines as "frontier defence troops stationed in the border marches." N. Oikonomides has written that the landholdings of the highlanders resembled the old military estates in which armed service was exchanged for tax exemption, though he adds that in the thirteenth century this tax exemption was total and some *pronoia* was involved.⁸ Similar opinions have been articulated by P. Mutačiev, A. A. Vasiliev, B. Gorjanov, and P. Wittek.⁹ In contrast, G. Arnakis simply speaks of the highlanders as "farmers," who were "exempt from taxation because they defended the frontiers near which their estates were located," and it can be shown that this interpretation is much more accurate than the view generally held.¹⁰

First, we must ask what these highlanders were given. It seems that at least some of the highlanders were newcomers to the frontier area. These "settlers from all over" were presumably given the land they settled on. Then, at a later date, in order to ensure their continued occupation of the highlands, they were given tax exemption and some *pronoia*. What was required of them in return? For the land that some of them may have received, they were asked to inhabit the frontier, and for the tax exemption, etc., that all of them received, they were asked to remain there. In other words, the first exchange between the imperial government and the highlanders involved land in return for occupation of the highlands, and the second exchange involved tax exemption, etc., in return for continued occupation of the highlands. Although it may seem to be a fine point, neither exchange involved military service. The Nikaian emperors knew that continued occupation would include lo-

calized defense of their own lands and occasional sorties into Turkish territory for booty, and in this way the highlanders served the empire by acting as a buffer between Turkish marauders and the valleys of the Nikaian Empire. But this "military service" was performed even before they received special exemptions; it had been necessary for their personal survival. After receiving tax exemption, there is no evidence that they performed any additional service other than defending their lands and making raids, and so their only obligation to the state was to remain on their lands.

But the real question is not whether they were "settled" or "smallholders" (both of which they do appear to have been), but whether they were soldiers. Nowhere are they called "soldiers"; never are they associated with the words for "army," "military," "battle," or "war." Nor in fact are they even called "akritai," a word that has been applied to them only by modern scholars, evoking possibly inappropriate images from an earlier time and a frontier further to the east. Pachymeres simply speaks of them as "settlers" inhabiting τὰς ἄκρας and says that Nikaian policy affected "all" of them, not a certain subset of the population that became "soldiers." But can the Nikaian highlanders be identified as soldiers through their actions? It seems to me that the most reasonable definition of a Byzantine soldier is a man who performed military duties at the command of military leaders responsible to the imperial government. While it is possible that the highlanders may have acted at times in concert with the Nikaian army, there is nothing to suggest that they were part of this army. Rather, they were an independent group of frontier settlers only nominally under Nikaian control who, without much organization or discipline, defended their lands and harassed their opposite numbers in Turkish territory as best they could. Even with the increase in hostile activity along the frontier that led the Nikaian emperors to grant them tax exemption, gifts, and *pronoiai*, there is no evidence that this brought about any change whatsoever in their personal military activities, activities which, as vital as they were to the Nikaian state, did not make them soldiers.¹¹

⁸G. Ostrogorski, *Pronija, prilog istoriji feudalizma u Vizantiji i u južnoslovenskim zemljama* (Belgrade, 1951), 41–42 (= G. Ostrogorski, *Pour l'histoire de la féodalité byzantine* [Brussels, 1954], 63–64). Ostrogorski used Pachymeres' reference to *pronoia* to support his view of a direct correlation between military service and *pronoia*. However, if the highlanders were not soldiers, this correlation founders, as I think it should. P. Charanis, "On the Social Structure and Economic Organization of the Byzantine Empire in the Thirteenth Century and Later," *BSI* 12 (1951), 134; D. M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium* (London, 1972), 88; Oikonomides, "Compagnies," 359.

⁹Mutačiev, "Vojniški," 557–58, 589–91, 595–97; A. A. Vasiliev, *History of the Byzantine Empire* (Madison, Wisc., 1964), II, 602–3; B. Gorjanov, *Pozdnevizantijskij feodalizm* (Moscow, 1962), 78; P. Wittek, *Das Fürstentum Mentesche* (Istanbul, 1934), 10.

¹⁰G. Arnakis, "Byzantium's Anatolian Provinces during the Reign of Michael Palaeologus," *Actes du XIIe Congrès international d'études byzantines* (Belgrade, 1964), II, 40–41.

¹¹The position of the highlanders, which had remained relatively stable during the reigns of John Vatatzes and Theodore II Laskaris and for the first few years of Michael VIII's reign, underwent a radical transformation shortly after the reconquest of Constantinople as they were transformed into campaign troops. What Michael VIII's official, named Chadenos, did in Asia Minor is not entirely clear, but it seems that either the landholdings of the highlanders were drastically reduced or

(2) In a document from the Zographou dossier, John Apelmene, *doux* of the theme of Boleron and Mosynopolis, delivered the village of Prevista on the Strymon to the monastery of Zographou. Within the text of the act there is a portion of the chrysobull ordering this transfer: besides granting Zographou Prevista, the emperor added that (translating the text literally) “since this monastery held a paroikos named Michael, [son] of Daniel, my imperium orders that although he earlier was enrolled militarily, he should be discharged again and held and enjoyed by this monastery along with his brothers, as well as with the paroikos that he himself held, the soldier John Savvas” and a certain Smoleos. So Apelmene declared that he was now giving Zographou the village of Prevista and “along with this we discharge Michael, [son] of Daniel, who earlier was enrolled militarily, and we give him to the monastery along with his brothers, as well as the paroikos that Daniel himself held, John Savvas” and Smoleos and the proskathemenos George of Niketas.¹² Since some scholars have suggested that we may be in the presence of the peasant soldier or the smallholding pronovia soldier,¹³ this text deserves careful attention.

their lands were confiscated and redistributed as pronovia. Because of this ambiguity, I will not deal with the fate of the highlanders during the post-Nikaian era here. On the Chadenos affair, see Oikonomidēs, “Compagnies,” 359–60; M. Angold, *A Byzantine Government in Exile* (London, 1975), 125, 195–96; Mutačiev, “Vojniški,” 596; Arnakis, “Byzantium’s Anatolian Provinces,” 40–41; Charanis, “Social Structure,” 133; P. Charanis, “The Monastic Properties and the State in the Byzantine Empire,” *DOP* 4 (1948), 110; H. Ahrweiler, “La concession des droits incorporels,” *Actes du XIIe Congrès international d’études byzantines* (Belgrade, 1964), II, 103–14, repr. in Ahrweiler, *Études sur les structures administratives et sociales de Byzance* (London, 1971), no. I, 111 note 48; and D. Jacoby in *BZ* 73 (1980), 89.

¹²W. Regel, E. Kurtz, and B. Korablev, *Actes de Zographou*, I: *Actes grecs*, *VizVrem* 13 (1907), suppl. 1, no. 16, lines 20–26: ἐπεὶ δὲ καὶ παροικον εἶχεν ἡ τοιαύτη μονὴ λεγόμενον Μιχαὴλ τὸν τοῦ Δανιὴλ, διορίζεται ἡ βασιλεία μου, εἰ καὶ ἐφθασε στρατευθῆναι, ἀποστρατευθῆναι πάλιν καὶ κατέχεσθαι καὶ νέμεσθαι παρὰ τῆς τοιαύτης μονῆς μετὰ τῶν ἀγαθῶν αὐτοῦ, ἀλλὰ δὴ καὶ τὸν πάροικον, ὃν κατεῖχεν ὁ αὐτός, στρατιώτην Ἰωάννην τὸν Σάββαν, ὡσαύτως καὶ τὸν Σμόλεον ὅστις ἐνὶ ἀρετίᾳ εἰς τὸ περι[.].[.].[.], and lines 35–41: ἀλλὰ δὴ καὶ τὸν Μιχαὴλ τὸν τοῦ Δανιὴλ, ὅστις ἐφθασε στρατευθῆναι, ἀποστρατεύομεν καὶ παραδίδομεν αὐτὸν πρὸς τὸ μέρος τῆς τοιαύτης θείας καὶ σεβασμίας μονῆς μετὰ τῶν ἀδελφῶν αὐτοῦ, ἀλλὰ δὴ καὶ τὸν πάροικον, ὃν κατεῖχεν ὁ αὐτός Δανιὴλ, Ἰωάννην τὸν Σάββαν, ὡσαύτως παραδίδωμι καὶ τὸν Σμόλεον τὸν ὄντα εἰς τὸ περι[.].[.].[.], ὁμοίως καὶ τὸν Γεώργιου τοῦ Νικήτα, τὸν προσκαθήμενον εἰς τοῦ Τζόχη (hereafter *Zographou*).

¹³A. Laiou-Thomadakis, *Peasant Society in the Late Byzantine Empire* (Princeton, 1977), 143–44; B. Ferjančić, “Quelques significations du mot stratiote dans les chartes de basse Byzance,” *ZRVI* 21 (1982), 98–99; Oikonomidēs, “Compagnies,” 357 note 36.

First of all, F. Dölger has pointed out the diplomatic problems with the document. Apelmene’s act itself bears the date “March indiction 2,” while the inserted chrysobull is dated “April indiction 2.” Thus, there is an error either in one of the months or in one of the indiction years. As for the date, the indiction year 2, repeated three times in the entire document, was thought by S. Kyriakides to correspond to the year 1348/9, but Dölger argued that if the document is genuine and was issued in 1348/9, then it almost certainly should mention Andronikos II’s chrysobull of 1325 confirming Zographou’s possession of Prevista at the request of Michael Asen of Bulgaria.¹⁴ For his own part Dölger, unsatisfied with the year 1318/9 suggested by Regel, preferred 1323/4, a date basically without foundation.¹⁵ More recently Lj. Maksimović proposed the date 1274, basing this on the document’s reference to a *gramma* of an anonymous sevastokrator. While the absence of an appropriate sevastokrator in the first half of the fourteenth century led Kyriakides to advance the date, Maksimović identifies this sevastokrator as Constantine Tornikes, present in some thirteenth-century documents from the Zographou dossier.¹⁶ This is a possibility, but we must ask why a 1289 chrysobull for Zographou (*Zographou*, no. 11), confirming its possessions including those on the Strymon, does not mention Prevista.

Furthermore, there are prosopographical problems. None of the persons mentioned in the act is known from any other published source. While the apographeus of the theme of Thessaloniki, Demetrios Apelmene, is well known from the turn of the fourteenth century, no *doux* “John” Apelmene is otherwise attested. These considerations, along with the general nature of the act, do nothing to allay the suspicion that the document is a falsification intended to legitimize Zographou’s possession of a group of peasants. But regardless of whether Apelmene’s act or the chrysobull inserted within it is genuine, the information that they contain should be based on a certain reality, if only in regard to the social and institutional structures sug-

¹⁴S. Kyriakides, *Βυζαντινὰ μελέται*, II–V (Thessaloniki, 1937), 86–88; F. Dölger, *Regesten der Kaiserurkunden des oströmischen Reiches* (Munich, 1924–65), no. 2509; *Zographou*, no. 23 (1325).

¹⁵Dölger, *Regesten*, no. 2509, thought a scribe may have misread “indiction 12” as “indiction 2,” but then Dölger miscalculated the world-year. Indiction 12 is not 1323/4 but, e.g., 1313/4 or 1328/9.

¹⁶Lj. Maksimović, *Byzantine Provincial Administration under the Palaiologoi* (Amsterdam, 1988), 109 note 20.

gested by the act. Therefore the document, even if a falsification, cannot be dismissed out of hand.

But there are problems even within the portion of the text of interest to us. The passage from the inserted chrysobull, "the paroikos that he himself held, the soldier John Savvas," literally describing a situation in which a soldier possessed a paroikos who was a soldier, is completely without parallel. A simple alteration of the text may be in order: "the paroikos that the soldier himself held, John Savvas" (τὸν παροικόν, ὃν κατεῖχεν ὁ αὐτὸς στρατιώτης, Ἰωάννην τὸν Σάββαν). But even this is unsatisfactory, for Michael is now being termed both paroikos and soldier in a single sentence of the chrysobull, juridically jejune if the intention of the document was to change Michael's status.

Further, in regard to the terminology utilized in the document, P. Lemerle has warned us that the verbs στρατεύω and ἀποστρατεύω (*enrôler* and *démobiliser*) ought not always be taken literally. He has shown this convincingly in respect to the 1089 act exchanging the lands of the monk Christodoulos on Kos for new lands on Patmos. In this act the apographeus Kopsenos was ordered to ἀποστρατεύειν "whoever 'was earlier enrolled' (ἔφθασε . . . στρατεύσαι) up to this time on the isle of Patmos" and to στρατεύειν "anew those on the lands on Kos, which now return to the state through exchange with the said monk."¹⁷ Lemerle's interpretation is that the peasants in question on Patmos were to be relieved of their fiscal obligations toward the state, but only to have them transferred to the new monastery, while those peasants on Kos would no longer render their *telos* and other burdens toward a private landowner, but toward the state.¹⁸ That the text has nothing to do with military obligations is clear from the list of peasants that Kopsenos says ἀπεστρατεύσαμεν. While most are men with families, one entry is "The widow Kyriake, having a grandson Niketas."¹⁹

The use of such military terminology evidently had its origins in a more or less gradual process whereby middle Byzantine peasants commuted their hereditary military obligations, burdening

either them or their property, for a payment. As late as the eleventh century, the sense of a real military obligation is still occasionally seen. Thus, one monastery was fortunate enough to receive a grant of "tax-free" (*ateleis*) paroikoi released from all burdens and military duties (*stratiōtikon leitourgēma*), which meant that it could now demand greater rents and services from such paroikoi.²⁰ But by the thirteenth century such "military burdens" generally seem to have become simply another category of fiscal obligation levied upon the dependent peasantry. We see this in the predominance of such phrases as τὰ στρατιωτικά ζητήματα . . . ἀλλὰ δὴ καὶ τὰ δημοσιακὰ κεφάλαια, τέλεσμάτων δημοσιακῶν τε καὶ στρατιωτικῶν, and κεφαλαίον βασιλικὸν καὶ στρατιωτικόν.²¹

In the late period certain phrases do appear that parallel the verbs στρατεύω and ἀποστρατεύω in the act of John Apelmene. In 1321 Andronikos II granted the village of Soucha μετὰ τῶν ἐν αὐτῷ ἀστρατεύων Βλάχων to the church of Ioannina.²² Did this mean that the Vlachs now simply rendered their *telos* and other obligations to the church of Ioannina, or should we see some kind of actual military service that Vlachs normally owed? Unfortunately our knowledge of the status of Vlachs in this period is thoroughly nebulous, and it is difficult to draw parallels with other peasants because, at the very least, we know that the medieval Serbian kingdom reckoned this ethnic group in a separate and distinct legal category.²³

A much closer parallel to Apelmene's act is found in a patriarchal decree confirming a donation made by a certain Megas Konostaulos in the vicinity of Sozopolis. The act bears no date, but J. Darrouzès places it within the patriarchate of John Kosmas (1294–1303) or perhaps Isaïas (1323–32). In the document the patriarch speaks of the duties of this particular Megas Konostaulos: ". . . govern-

²⁰ F. Miklosich and J. Müller, *Acta et diplomata graeca medii aevi sacra et profana*, 6 vols. (Vienna, 1860–90), V, 7, lines 12–14 (1051) (hereafter MM), cited by Xanatalos, *Beiträge*, 45.

²¹ MM IV, 86, lines 10–13 (1283); VI, 212, line 20 (1262); IV, 94, line 9 (1280). See also Angold, *Byzantine Government*, 223.

²² MM V, 87, line 5 (1321); Dölger, *Regesten*, no. 2460.

²³ On this, see F. Taranovski, *Istorija srpskog prava u Nemanjićkoj državi*, 3 vols. (Belgrade, 1931–35), I, 71–76, and more recently, M. Blagojević, "Zakon svetoga Simeona i svetoga Save," *Zbornik radova za međunarodnog skupa "Sava Nemanjić—sveti Sava, istorija i predanje"* (Belgrade, 1979), 144–57. Portions of the so-called "Vlach Law," compiled during the latter 12th and 13th centuries, are preserved in two 14th-century Serbian chrysobulls: S. Novaković, *Zakonski spomenici srpskih država srednjega veka* (Belgrade, 1912), 629, lxxxvii ff and 701, ccii ff (= A. Solovjev, *Odabrani spomenici srpskog prava* [Belgrade, 1926], 96–97 and 142).

¹⁷ M. Nystazopoulou-Pelekidou, *Βυζαντινὰ ἔγγραφα τῆς μονῆς Πάτμου*, II (Athens, 1980), no. 54, lines 10–11 (1089): ἀποστρατεύσεις ὅσους ἔφθασας κατὰ τὸν πέρουσι καιρὸν ἐν τῇ νήσῳ τῇ Πάτμῳ στρατεύσαι, στρατεύσης δὲ . . . (hereafter Patmos II).

¹⁸ P. Lemerle, *The Agrarian History of Byzantium* (Galway, 1979), 226–28. Dölger, *Regesten*, no. 1153, and D. Xanatalos, *Beiträge zur Wirtschafts- und Sozialgeschichte Makedoniens im Mittelalter* (Speyer, 1937), 44, offer the literal military interpretations.

¹⁹ Patmos II, no. 54, lines 15–21.

ing and administering all the rights (*dikaia*) of the West, he is assigned and ordered by my most mighty and holy emperor to τοὺς μὲν ἅπὸ στρατείας ποιεῖν, τοὺς δ' αὖ πάλιν ὑπὸ στρατείας τίθεσθαι.²⁴ The key term *strateia* has a long history and numerous meanings. For example, it appears in Michael VIII's prostagma of 1272 for his son Andronikos with the indisputable sense of a soldier's military responsibilities; on the other hand, in 1274 Michael ordered the inhabitants of Vare to repay the Lemvotissa monastery fifty-five hyperpyra that they owed the monastery for the sake of their *strateia*.²⁵ Thus, at nearly the same moment imperial documents speak of *strateia* as both military service and a fiscal obligation.

Since the other duties of the Megas Konostaulos in the patriarchal decree are entirely devoid of any military tone, as is the rest of the document, I think P. Lemerle (*Agrarian History*, 228 note 2) is correct in suggesting that the act is speaking only about juridical and fiscal responsibilities. A possible translation of the passage is that the Megas Konostaulos in the course of his duties was ordered by the emperor "to make some people free of fiscal obligations [for the benefit of monasteries or other landowners] and to put others back again under a fiscal obligation." On the whole, of course, no late Byzantine peasant—no more than the peasants on Patmos and Kos in the act of 1089—was ever "freed" of his fiscal obligations. The *telos* and other charges and burdens owed by the late Byzantine peasant might no longer be demanded by the fisc, but they would then, perfectly legally, be demanded by a landowner or a pronoiar. The first of these recipients was usually a monastery or an individual who was granted these peasants as a special mark of imperial beneficence or as a special reward for extraordinary service. Such individuals were not really pronoiars because the grant was not conditional upon a further obligation of service, and such grants, because of their exceptional nature, would probably not normally be included within a formal definition of the competency of a provincial official such as the Megas Konostaulos

in the patriarchal decree. However, local officials most likely played an important part in the procedure of delineating and administering common grants of pronoiā, that is, παραδόσεις παροίκων πρὸς στρατιώτας.²⁶ Thus, part of the local official's responsibility—we are probably speaking of a kephale—would have been to "pronoiarize" and "de-pronoiarize" lands and paroikoi, in other words, to give their revenues to pronoiars and to take them away from pronoiars (πρὸς στρατιώτας δίδοναι and ἅπὸ στρατιωτῶν ἀποσπᾶν). I wonder whether this is the meaning of John Apelmene's act. Perhaps the monks of Zographou were claiming that Michael, along with his labor and tax obligations, had been unjustly "pronoiarized" (προνοιάσθαι, στρατεύεσθαι, ὑπὸ στρατείας τίθεσθαι, πρὸς στρατιώτας δίδοσθαι), and the purpose of Apelmene's act was to "de-pronoiarize" him (ἀποστρατεύεσθαι, ἅπὸ στρατείας ποιεῖσθαι),²⁷ that is, to take the revenues owed by Michael out of the hands of a pronoiar and to give them to a non-pronoiar, the monastery of Zographou. Possibly no one mentioned by name in the document was or ever had been a soldier of any kind.

While it may be freely acknowledged that this hypothetical interpretation does not satisfactorily explain every relevant aspect of John Apelmene's act, neither does the interpretation that Michael had been a smallholding soldier ("peasant soldier") or a petty pronoiā soldier. It is, however, necessary to conclude that there is insufficient justification to use this Michael, son of Daniel, as an example of a smallholding soldier or a smallholding pronoiar.

(3) Lavra's 1321 praktikon mentions a certain paroikos of the monastery, "John Kaseidares, that is, the Stratiotes" (Ἰωάννης ὁ Κασεϊδάρης ἦτοι ὁ στρατιώτης), who lived with his family in Kalamaria and owed Lavra a *telos* of four hyperpyra. It has been suggested that Kaseidares may once have been a free peasant and soldier who had fallen upon hard times.²⁸ This is a possibility, though it is difficult to draw firm conclusions from the evi-

²⁴ C. Astruc, "Un acte patriarchal inédit de l'époque des Paléologues," *Annuaire de l'Institut de philologie et d'histoire orientales et slaves* 12 (Brussels, 1952), 22, lines 2–5; J. Darrouzès, *Les registres des actes du patriarcat de Constantinople, I: Les actes des patriarches*, fasc. 5 (Paris, 1977), no. 2167.

²⁵ A. Heisenberg, *Aus der Geschichte und Literatur der Palaiologenzeit*, SBMünchen, Philos.-philol.Kl., Abh. 10 (Munich, 1920), repr. in Heisenberg, *Quellen und Studien zur spätbyzantinischen Geschichte* (London, 1973), 40, line 82, and 41, line 93; MM IV, 256, lines 5–9 (1274). Angold, *Byzantine Government*, 195.

²⁶ N. Oikonomidès, "Contribution à l'étude de la pronoiā au XIII^e siècle," *REB* 22 (1964), repr. in Oikonomidès, *Documents et études sur les institutions de Byzance* (London, 1976), no. VI, 173, offers a possible reconstruction of this procedure in the 13th century.

²⁷ For the verb προνοιάζω, see V. Mošin, "Akti iz svetogorskih arhiva," *Spomenik Srpske kraljevske akademije nauka* 91 (1939), 165; *Patmos* II, no. 61, line 39; and P. Lemerle, A. Guillou, N. Svoronos, and D. Papachryssanthou, *Actes de Lavra I–IV* (Paris, 1970–82), IV, pp. 52–53 (hereafter *Lavra*).

²⁸ *Lavra* II, no. 109, lines 157–58; Laiou-Thomadakis, *Peasant Society*, 140, 144 and note 4; Ferjančić, "Quelques significations," 101; *PLP*, no. 11326.

dence of names or epithets. If "Stratiotes," attested elsewhere as a paroikos surname,²⁹ should suggest to us that the paroikos had once been a soldier, what should we think of paroikoi with names like "Nicholas, called Sevastos" (Νικόλαος ὁ λεγόμενος Σεβαστός) and "John Caesar" (Ἰωάννης ὁ Καῖσαρ)?³⁰ But even if John Kaseidares had been a soldier, he could just as well have been a mercenary rather than a smallholding soldier.

(4) In 1348 Stefan Dušan issued a chrysobull that returned the village of Zavlantia and its paroikoi to the monastery of Hagios Georgios. According to the text, sometime between 1342 and 1348 the ruler of Thessaly, John Angelos,³¹ had taken Zavlantia from the monastery. The passage of interest to us reads: "... [the monastery] held and enjoyed it [i.e., the village] before the said deceased Sevastokrator John took it away; that is, the paroikoi from those found in it were set in the order of soldiers" (καθὼς ἐκράτει καὶ ἐνέμετο αὐτὸ πρὸ τοῦ ἀποσπάσαι τοῦτο ὁ δηλωθεὶς σεβαστοκράτωρ ἐκείνους, ἡγουν τοὺς ἀπὸ τῶν ἐν αὐτῷ εὐρισκομένων παροίκους καὶ εἰς τάξιν στρατιωτῶν ἀποκαθισταμένους).³² Nearly every scholar offering an opinion on this document has concluded that the paroikoi became soldiers, and B. Ferjančić, in particular, has suggested specifically that they became smallholding peasant soldiers.³³ Yet it is difficult to be sure about this.

First, Dušan was returning more than paroikoi to the monastery. The document lists ten men, as well as a number of escheated holdings: "Katzounes, Ivanes, Gorgos, Kapeletos, Rodeses, Glavas, Petritzas, Armparikes, Domvtilas and Constantine son of Stephan, and the *exaleimmatika*

stasia of the two brothers Lipavades and Xakitres, of Vranas, of the Kynegoi, of Allelouia, of Armenochorites and of Vratos." Dušan ordered that the monastery "shall enjoy both the said paroikoi by name and the holdings" (καὶ νέμῃται τοὺς τε δηλωθέντας παροίκους κατ' ὄνομα καὶ τὰ στασία), and later he repeats that by the authority of his chrysobull "the monastery holds and enjoys . . . the said village along with those from the paroikoi set in the order of soldiers by the deceased Sevastokrator *kyr* John, as was said, and [with] the holdings. . . ."³⁴ If the Sevastokrator John had made these paroikoi soldiers, then we are observing two separate acts: the confiscation of lands *and* the enrollment of monastic paroikoi into the army.

Second, the key phrase, "those from the paroikoi set in the order of soldiers," is very peculiar, and the construction εἰς τάξιν στρατιωτῶν is a hapax with a meaning that is far from obvious. On the other hand, the phrase ἡ γῆ . . . δοθεῖσα πρὸς τοὺς στρατιώτας, or some variation, was the common way of referring to a frequent occurrence, giving land in pronοia to pronοiars (stratiotai). Both lay and monastic praktika mention, as here, first the paroikoi assigned to the landlord and follow this with, again as here, a list of lands including *exaleimmata*. It is possible, as I. Ševčenko once suggested,³⁵ that the paroikoi and *exaleimmatika stasia* of the village of Zavlantia had been taken away from the monastery and given to pronοiars, and that these paroikoi, far from becoming soldiers, found themselves literally "under the system of pronοiars (or pronοia soldiers)." Perhaps the appearance of the phrase εἰς τάξιν στρατιωτῶν can be attributed to nothing more than the poor knowledge that the text's Serbian or Thessalian author had of Byzantine legal terminology.³⁶

By no means have I proven that this 1348 chrysobull involved merely a common disagreement between pronοiars and a monastery. I have only tried to demonstrate that there are sufficient grounds to question whether the paroikoi mentioned in the document had been transformed into soldiers, and, consequently, that the document cannot be used as evidence of this phenomenon. Further, even if we grant that these paroikoi did in

²⁹ *Patmos* II, no. 75, line 15' (1288).

³⁰ D. Papachryssanthou, *Actes de Xénophon* (Paris, 1986), no. 25, line 103 (hereafter *Xénophon*); *Lavra* II, no. 109, line 786. This is particularly problematic when these names or epithets are well established, "old" words, such as "stratiotes," as opposed to more recently created "new" words such as Gasmoules, Thelematarios, and Prosalentes (for the latter two, see below).

³¹ B. Ferjančić, "Sevastokrator i Vizantiji," *ZRVI* 11 (1968), 184–85, and idem, *Tesalija u XIII i XIV veku* (Belgrade, 1974), 223–25, has adequately demonstrated that the "Sevastokrator John" of the following document is John Angelos, a relative of Kantakouzenos, appointed governor of Thessaly in 1342. *PLP*, no. 208, repeats the older opinion that the document refers to John I Angelos, ruler of Thessaly from 1266/7 until before March 1289.

³² A. Solovjev and V. Mošin, *Grčke povelje srpskih vladara* (Belgrade, 1936), no. 21, lines 18–21.

³³ For example, Mutačičev, "Vojniški," 530–31; Dölger in *BZ* 26 (1926), 102–13; Solovjev and Mošin, *Povelje*, pp. 162 and 494; Charanis, "Monastic Properties," 112; Ostrogorski, *Feodalitè*, 158; and Ferjančić, *Tesalija*, 222–24 and 234–35, "Sevastokrator," 184–85, and "Quelques significations," 99.

³⁴ Solovjev and Mošin, *Povelje*, no. 21, lines 21–29 and 35–39. On *exaleimmata*, see M. Bartusis, "Εξάλειμμα: Escheat in Byzantium," *DOP* 41 (1986), 55–81.

³⁵ I. Ševčenko, "Nicolas Cabasilas' 'Anti-Zealot' Discourse," *DOP* 11 (1957), 158 note 132.

³⁶ The sentence construction in this document (*pace* Solovjev and Mošin, *Povelje*, p. xcix), for example, in lines 18–19, is terrible.

fact become soldiers, we still could not conclude that they became smallholding soldiers. They may have become mercenaries with no attachment to land whatsoever.

(5) Even when it is clear that a source is dealing with soldiers, it is frequently impossible to determine what kind of soldier is meant. In a well-known example, Pachymeres writes that Andronikos II contemplated drastic action when faced with increasing Turkish advances in Anatolia around 1300: "Because of these things it appeared necessary to take the one measure still remaining: to release from the overlords however much was given in pronioia to the monasteries, the churches, and the imperial entourage, [and] to assign everything—including even the lands attached to single monks' cells—to soldiers, so that they would stay and defend their own."³⁷

Even though the patriarch did not oppose the plan, Pachymeres notes that because of the administrative breakdown in Anatolia and the flight of the population, it was never realized. On the one hand, it has been said that Andronikos was planning to distribute all of these properties as land grants to soldiers;³⁸ on the other hand, he could have been planning a transfer of pronioiai from one set of landlords to another, in this case, pronioia soldiers. Either plan would have created more soldiers with a better reason to stay and fight. This case, then, cannot be used as an example of the institution of smallholding soldiers.

(6) According to an inscription from Mistra, at some time between 1312 and 1320, six hundred modioi of land were given to the monastery of Vrontochiou in exchange for an unspecified quantity of land in the neighboring mountain range that had been "given to soldiers" (καὶ δοθείσης [later: παραδοθείσης] πρὸς στρατιώτας). D. Zakythinos regarded this as proof that the mountains around Mistra were being settled with soldiers; more recently, B. Ferjančić has seen the "peasant soldier" in this passage. Neither scholar can be proved wrong. Indeed, whoever received land on a mountain was probably not the most privileged of individuals. Nevertheless, the passage could just as well be speaking of a couple of parcels of land

that pronioia soldiers were holding as part of their *oikonomiai*.³⁹

(7) The 1342 *gramma* of Michael Gavrielopoulos, the semi-independent governor of Thessaly, granted a number of privileges to the inhabitants of the *kastron* of Phanarion. Predominant among them was his promise that "whatever soldiers there were, or shall be, shall continue to give military service, and I shall not demand the other from them, this is, *tzakonikē* guard [service]." He added, "nor shall I ask all those same Phanariotai on campaign at any time for three years. After the completion of the three years, they shall give military service and not the other, that is, *tzakonikē* [service]."⁴⁰ Thus, while the soldiers (*stratiotai*) of Phanarion were still obligated to continue performing military service, they were exempted specifically from guard service entirely and from campaign service for the first three years after the promulgation of Gavrielopoulos' act. After this period their military service would include campaign duty.

B. Ferjančić has viewed the *stratiotai* in this document as smallholding soldiers.⁴¹ His argument is based on the phrasing of the first lines of the document, that read, with Miklosich and Müller's restorations, Ἐπει[δὴ ἀπαιτοῦ]σι παντὶ [σθένει οἱ ἄ]ρχοντες Φαναριῶται, μείζονές τε καὶ μικροί, [κοσμικοὶ καὶ] κληρικοὶ, χρυσοβουλλάτοι καὶ ἐσκουσάτοι, ὅπως πορίσωνται [γράμμα τῆς αὐθεντίας μου . . . ἂν δὲ . . .] εὐρίσκωνται ἢ τινες εὐρίσκοντο στρατιῶται . . . , and so on. Despite the several lacunae, Ferjančić has seen three levels of Phanariotai here (the greater and lesser archons, and the *stratiotai*), from which he concludes that the *stratiotai*, since they were not archons, were therefore not pronoiars, but smallholding soldiers. However, I see no way to make a direct connection between the word "*stratiotai*" in the document and the list of archons at the beginning of the document. The word "*stratiotai*" quite simply appears

³⁷ Pachymeres, Bonn ed., II, 390.2–7; trans. adapted from A. Laiou, *Constantinople and the Latins* (Cambridge, Mass., 1972), 119, and E. Fisher, "A Note on Pachymeres' 'De Andronico Palaeologo,'" *Byzantion* 40 (1970), 233. See also the comments of I. Ševčenko, *Society and Intellectual Life in Late Byzantium* (London, 1981), addenda, p. 2.

³⁸ For example, by Mutačiev, "Vojniški," 528, and Charanis, "Monastic Properties," 111.

³⁹ G. Millet, "Inscriptions byzantines de Mistra," *BCH* 23 (1899), pp. 112–14, no. 4, lines 6–9 and 17; Dölger, *Regesten*, no. 2438; D. Zakythinos, *Le despotat grec de Morée*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1932, Athens, 1953; rev. ed. by Ch. Maltezos, London, 1975), II, 134; Ferjančić, "Quelques significations," 101. The verb δίδωμι is used regularly in documents that speak of the transfer of pronioia to "*stratiotai*."

⁴⁰ MM V, 260, lines 20–22. On the date, see N. Bees in *BZ* 21 (1912), 170 note 1. On this document and on *tzakonikē* service, see M. Bartusis, "Urban Guard Service in Late Byzantium and Medieval Serbia: The Terminology and the Institution," *Macedonian Studies* (forthcoming).

⁴¹ Ferjančić, *Teslija*, 183–89, and idem, "Quelques significations," 99–100. Charanis, "Social Structure," 118 and 123, also suggested these *stratiotai* were smallholding soldiers.

in a different clause, no matter how one restores the lacunae. Thus, I would paraphrase the opening as "Since the archons of Phanarion request that they receive a letter from me [that] if any stratiotai are present, they shall give military service and not guard service." Further, our growing knowledge of the institution of collective pronioia suggests that some pronioia soldiers, such as the Klazomenitai of Serres, may not ever have been considered archons.⁴² On the whole, I think it very likely that the stratiotai of Phanarion were pronoiars, but we really do not know.⁴³ In any event, we cannot use this case as an example of smallholding soldiers.

(8) According to a synodal decision from 1367, John V's uncle, the monk Antonios Glavas Tarchaneiotēs, had informed the patriarch that same year that the emperor was planning "to establish soldiers in the villages outside of Constantinople up to Selyvria and to give them the fields in them and all the land in them." But as for two villages in this area that the Church itself held, named Oikonomeiou and Paspara, Antonikos stated that the emperor "will hold these for a year, and if he accomplishes what he intends, he shall continue to hold them and give the Church another income equal to that of these properties; but if he does not accomplish what he wishes, these [properties] will be returned to it [i.e., the Church]." Nevertheless, the patriarch refused to agree to the plan, forcing the monk Antonios to offer another suggestion on behalf of John V: "Since you [i.e., the synod] will not give up these [villages] to him [i.e., the emperor], lease them so that he may hold [them] as others hold [them], and sow in them and render the *mortē* to the Church."⁴⁴ The patriarch and an assembled synod still refused to acquiesce to this

action. There is no evidence that John V, who seems to have had his own doubts about the successful prospects of the plan,⁴⁵ actually carried out any aspect of the scheme. In fact, seventeen years later, one of the villages in question was still in the possession of the Church, although it was nearly deserted.⁴⁶

Even though the proposed system of land tenure for these soldiers is ambiguous, the conclusion in the scholarship is more or less unanimous that John V was planning to settle smallholding soldiers in the villages between Constantinople and Selyvria.⁴⁷ This is possible, but there are a number of problems with this interpretation. Nothing in the document suggests unequivocally that the soldiers were to inhabit the area mentioned; rather, they were to be "established" there (using the vague verb καθοστημι) and "given" the land (using the equally vague δίδωμι). Moreover, the most troublesome aspect of seeing this as a proposal to settle smallholding soldiers is the reference to a one-year trial period in the first plan. If soldiers were settled and matters did not work out, were they then to be uprooted, and either discharged or sent elsewhere? Assuming the area involved was more or less uncultivated at the time of the proposal (since there would be no point in driving out productive peasants), would it not be absurd to expect new settlers, whether or not they were soldiers, to break even, much less show a profit, in one year's time? Such a short trial period would better accommodate a paper transaction, that is, the shift of revenues (*prosodoi*) from one group to another, from the Church to pronoiars. While further analysis of the document could explore the patriarch's canonical objections to the plans, the references to the *mortē* (vis-à-vis the *telos*), and the economic advantages and disadvantages of each of the plans to the state, the Church, and the proposed soldiers in the overall balance sheet, one fact would still remain: we simply do not know enough about the conditions of the soldiers' anticipated tenure of these lands in order to use the case as an example of a plan to create smallholding soldiers.

Finally, B. Ferjančić has identified, more or less tentatively, a few other men found in the documentary sources as smallholding soldiers. He has

⁴²On collective pronioia and the Klazomenitai, see Oikonomides, "Compagnies," 363–64 and 367–69. Cf. Laiou-Thomadakis, *Peasant Society*, 142–43.

⁴³K. Kyrris, "The Social Status of the Archontes of Phanari in Thessaly (1342)," *Hellenika* 18 (1964), 74, concluded that they were pronoiars, but for odd reasons.

⁴⁴MM I, 507, lines 15–18: . . . ὅτι ὁ βασιλεὺς ὁ ἄγιος βούλεται καταστήσαι στρατιώτας ἐν τοῖς χωρίοις ἔξω τῆς Κωνσταντινουπόλεως μέχρι τῆς Σηλυβρίας, οἷς καὶ βούλεται δοῦναι τὰ ἐν αὐτοῖς χωράφια καὶ τὴν γῆν πᾶσαν τὴν ἐν αὐτοῖς, and 22–25: κατέχειν γὰρ μέλλει ταῦτα μέχρι χρόνου ἑνός, καὶ εἰ μὲν ποιήσει, ὅπερ βούλεται, καθεξεί ταῦτα καὶ εἰσέτι καὶ δώσει τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ ἑτέραν πρόσοδον, ἴσης τοῖς κτήμασι τούτοις, εἰ δὲ οὐ ποιήσει, ὅπερ βούλεται, ἀντιστραφήσονται ταῦτα πρὸς αὐτήν. MM I, 508, lines 13–17: ἐπεὶ οὐ δίδοτε ταῦτα πρὸς αὐτόν, δότε ταῦτα, ἵνα κατέχῃ ὥσπερ κατέχουσιν ἕτεροι καὶ σπεύρουσιν ἐν αὐτοῖς καὶ ἀποδιδόσιν τὴν μορτὴν πρὸς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν. . . . For the location of Oikonomeiou, see the map in *Lavra* IV, p. 121.

⁴⁵See Charanis, "Monastic Properties," 115.

⁴⁶MM II, 62, cited by Laiou-Thomadakis, *Peasant Society*, 218.

⁴⁷See Ferjančić, "Quelques significations," 100–101; Dölger, *Regesten*, no. 3118; H. Schmid, "Byzantinisches Zehntwesen," *JÖB* 6 (1957), 63–64; Charanis, "Monastic Properties," 114–15; Mutaččiev, "Vojniški," 528.

suggested that the “Thessalonikan soldiers” who donated *exaleimmatika stasia* to Xenophon sometime before 1338, because of their anonymity and the apparently small sizes of the *stasia*, were possibly smallholding soldiers.⁴⁸ Yet, all sorts of people donated *exaleimmata* to monasteries, and, in any event, the Thessalonikan soldiers must have possessed other means of support; otherwise, their donation would have left them paupers. Ferjančić has also suggested that the anonymous soldier who had held a *zeugēlateion* that later appears in Chilandar’s possession may have been a smallholding soldier, as well as two stratiotai, Makros and Jacob, who appear as landowners in the region of Parapolia near Constantinople in 1334.⁴⁹ All three of these men could have been smallholding soldiers; they could just as well have been pronioia soldiers, or even mercenaries that held some property. There is not enough information on which to base conclusions.

It is quite possible that some of the texts cited above *may* in fact be dealing with smallholding soldiers. And many more examples could be added. For example, a 1285 praktikon for the Patmos monastery’s possessions on Lemnos refers to a piece of land located “near the thing given to the soldiers” (πλησίον τὸ δοθὲν τοῖς στρατιώταις).⁵⁰ Is the subject smallholding or pronioia soldiers? My guess is pronioia, but as with most of the examples cited above, we really do not know. Even in cases where much more information is provided, conclusions are inappropriate. For instance, we know that the Cretan cavalry settled in Anatolia in the last third of the thirteenth century were mercenaries, but were the lands on which they lived held on condition of military service?⁵¹ Or were the two Christian Turks that Patriarch Gregory of Cyprus writes about, who lost their “pronioia” in the 1280s, and who were then given in return “arable land” (*gē arosimos*) and enrolled in the “Persian military rolls,” pronoiars who became smallholding sol-

diers?⁵² Our conclusions are circumscribed by the nature of our sources.

One very important episode in which it is *almost* certain that small holdings were distributed to soldiers is found in Kantakouzenos’ account (I, 164. 22 ff) of the negotiations before the treaty of Epivatari in 1322. At the time Andronikos III informed his grandfather that “increasing the pay of the mercenaries of the army, I granted measures of land to each of ten gold pieces” (παρέσχον καὶ γῆς ἑκάστῳ πλῆθρα χρυσίων δέκα), and added, “Concerning the increase in pay you yourself know it had to be done. As for the land, I plead with you not to deprive the soldiers of it, partly because no loss has come to the public revenues from this distribution, and partly because through its smallness the distribution seems a benefit affording no hindrance to the soldiers in regard to their activity on campaign.” Kantakouzenos adds that, according to the terms of the treaty, the mercenaries were allowed to keep the land: “The land provided to those mercenaries was not to be bothered by those managing the *dēmosia* [i.e., tax officials], but it should be retained by them free of exactions” (I, 167.7–10).

There are at least three distinct ways to interpret this episode depending on how the phrase “measures of land of ten gold pieces” is to be construed. P. Mutačiev (“Vojniški,” 525 note 22 and 527) maintained that Andronikos III had granted his mercenaries parcels of arable land with a *value* of ten hyperpyra each. V. Parisot wrote that the mercenaries had received property with an *economic revenue* of ten hyperpyra.⁵³ More recently, N. Oikonomides argued that the episode actually involved small grants of pronoiar, each yielding an annual *fiscal revenue* of ten hyperpyra.⁵⁴ The first two possibilities speak of grants of land; the third, grants of pronoiar. To attempt to decide among them we need to consider the key elements of the

⁴⁸ Ferjančić, “Quelques significations,” 101. For more on this document, see the text to note 97 below.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 101. L. Petit, *Actes de Chilandar*, I: *Actes grecs*, *VizVrem* 17 (1911), suppl. 1, no. 41, lines 109–10 (1319): ζευγηλατεῖον τοῦ Μάλακα, κατεχομένου τούτου πρότερον παρὰ στρατιώτου. MM V, 260–61; *Lavra* III, no. 122, lines 10–11 and 13; *PLP*, no. 7938.

⁵⁰ *Patmos* II, no. 74, line 17 (1285); Dölger, *Regesten*, no. 2359.

⁵¹ Pachymeres, Bonn ed., II, 209.7–9: . . . ἐπ’ ἀνατολῆς κατοικίας καὶ ὁδοῖς ἐτησίαις ἀποτεταγμέναις ἐξικανῶν ὡς πιστοῖς συμμάχοις ἐχρήτο. Mutačiev, “Vojniški,” 527, wrote that the Cretan cavalry was an example of land given to mercenaries.

⁵² Γρηγορίου τοῦ Κυπρίου οἰκουμενικοῦ πατριάρχου Ἐπιστολαὶ καὶ Μῦθοι, ed. S. Eustratiades (Alexandria, 1910), p. 155, no. 159 (hereafter Eustratiades, *Gregory*). Cf. M. Bibikov, “Svedenija o pronii v pis’makh Grigorija Kiprskogo i ‘Istori’ Georgija Pakhimera,” *ZRVI* 17 (1976), 95.

⁵³ V. Parisot, *Cantacuzène, homme d’état et historien* (Paris, 1845), 59: “chaque militaire devenu . . . tenancier d’un immeuble lui donnant 10 pièces d’or de revenu.” That Parisot had rents or harvest in mind when he spoke of “revenue” is clear from the clause immediately following that adds, incorrectly, “en restera nanti à la seule condition de payer l’impôt au fisc.” Dölger, *Regesten*, nos. 2479 and 2671, speaks of “Land mit einem Ertrag” of ten hyperpyra, an ambiguous phrase that similarly seems to imply an *economic* yield rather than a value or fiscal assessment.

⁵⁴ Oikonomides, “Compagnies,” 358. Laiou, *Constantinople*, 290, in passing, also speaks of “prnoiari.”

passages: (1) Kantakouzenos twice refers to the grants as consisting of *gē*, the normal fiscal term for arable land; (2) this "land" is quantified not by area but by a monetary description, "measures of ten gold pieces"; (3) the grants caused no loss to public revenues; (4) the grants were of a size sufficiently small so as not to interfere with the soldiers' military service; and (5) the land granted was exempt from taxation.

It is not difficult to construct a scenario that accords with each of these elements and involves simple grants of land, each with a value of ten hyperpyra. We might envision each mercenary being granted, on a tax-exempt basis and for his personal cultivation, a small quantity of land (ten hyperpyra could purchase on average about sixteen modioi [1.6 hectares] of arable land⁵⁵) derived from state lands (or lands that had devolved to the state) not under cultivation at the time of the grant. Such a hypothetical arrangement fits each element of the scheme: "land" was involved; the grant, and its tax exemption, caused no loss to the fisc since it was not previously producing tax revenues anyway; and its small size (equivalent to about three soccer fields of arable land), suitable only for cultivation on a very modest scale, would not inordinately distract the mercenary from his military duties, should he choose to actually inhabit the property. If the "ten gold pieces" referred to an economic revenue, either simple rent or the total agricultural yield of the property, the scenario is more or less the same, except that the size of the property becomes larger. For comparison, a rent of ten hyperpyra required a property consisting of about one hundred modioi of arable land; a total economic yield of ten hyperpyra required about thirty-three modioi (see *Lavra* IV, 169 note 649).

For the grants to have involved pronioia, the scenario would be something along the following lines. Each mercenary received a grant of a fiscal revenue (*posotēs*) of ten hyperpyra drawn from the *telos* of certain properties held by the fisc that were not in production before the grant, and for which the mercenary would find cultivators. Such a grant would not interfere seriously with the mercenary's service because he would not work the land himself, and, as N. Oikonomides has suggested, ten hyperpyra was such a small income that it would

require the mercenary to continue to rely on his mercenary salary.

It is clear that there are a number of serious difficulties in interpreting the process in terms of pronioia grants. First, we have to excuse Kantakouzenos' use of the word *gē*, which he never uses elsewhere in the context of soldiers or pronioia, and assume that he really meant "revenues" (*prosodoi*), the term he commonly employs for pronioia grants. Second, the only way a grant of pronioia could cause no loss of revenues to the fisc is if the properties involved were not producing tax revenues prior to the grant (as my scenario suggests). However, this would mean (as I further suggest) that the mercenary would need to arrange the production of the property, a task that indeed might interfere with his military duties, at least initially. (If, on the other hand, the properties were in production prior to the grant, there would be a loss of income to the fisc of ten hyperpyra per grant.) And third, there is a curious redundancy in Kantakouzenos' statement that the lands were tax exempt, since by its nature the pronioia grant was a grant of taxes to a private party.

Nevertheless, the one major obstacle to concluding that the grants were simply grants of land is the key phrase "measures of land of ten gold pieces," which appears to suggest a *posotēs*, a quantity of fiscal revenues, not a valuation of land nor an economic return. The documentary sources ordinarily quantify land in only two ways: by its area and by its fiscal assessment (generally a function of its area). Land "prices" are encountered much less frequently (and economic returns not at all) because their inherent fluctuations were of little use to the fisc in establishing the tax liability of a property. It would not be adequate to say simply that the grants were of arable land with a *posotēs* of ten hyperpyra because, in order to produce ten hyperpyra of *telos*, each grant would need to amount to about five hundred modioi of average arable land (according to the usual fiscal assessment of one hyperpyron per fifty modioi of arable land of mixed quality), which unquestionably would interfere with the soldiers' military duties.

Whatever was happening here is extremely important. Either mercenaries were receiving small quantities of land, making them hybrid mercenary-smallholding soldiers, or they were receiving small pronioiai, making them hybrid mercenary-pronioia soldiers. Both of these possibilities display creativity and subtlety in their approach to military financing. In my opinion, "simple grants of land

⁵⁵ *Lavra* IV, p. 158. Cf. G. Ostrogorsky, "Löhne und Preise in Byzanz," *BZ* 32 (1932), 313–14, and E. Schilbach, *Byzantinische Metrologie* (Munich, 1970), 252–53. For simplicity, I have used the equivalency 1 modios = 1,000 m² throughout.

with a value of ten hyperpyra” makes better sense in the passages than “grants of pronioia yielding ten hyperpyra yearly,” but since this interpretation is not indisputable, I hesitate to use this episode as an example of furnishing mercenaries with small holdings.

Nevertheless, there are a number of cases that unquestionably involved smallholding soldiers. I would like to present them here, and then proceed to a characterization of the institution of smallholding soldiers in late Byzantium.

Vatatzes' Cumans

Around 1239 a large group of Cumans, fleeing before the Mongols, crossed the Danube and invaded Thrace. There they pillaged and attacked the towns that had only recently come under Nikaian control until around 1242, when, according to Akropolites, John III Vatatzes responded to the situation and “with gifts and diplomacy made them over from a very savage to an obedient people, and he drew them away from Macedonia [actually, Thrace], and ferried them to the eastern regions.” In an *enkomion* to his father, Theodore II Laskaris refers to this episode: “Having removed the Scyth [sc. Cuman] from the West and the western lands, you led his race to the East as a subject people and, substituting [them] for the sons of Persians, you have securely fettered their assaults toward the West.”⁵⁶ Gregoras adds that Vatatzes “enlisted them in the Roman armed forces, distributing lands to them for habitation (χώρας ἄλλοις ἄλλας διανειμάμενος εἰς κατοίκησιν), some in Thrace and Macedonia, others in Asia throughout the Maiandros [valley] and Phrygia” (I, 37.6–9), and soon afterward they received baptism.

Thus, the Cumans became soldiers, and they were given land for habitation, clearly indicating

that they were neither mercenaries nor pronoiars, but smallholding soldiers. On this, modern scholarship is in complete accord.⁵⁷ The only question is where they were settled. We observe that Gregoras says the Cumans were settled both in Asia and in Europe, whereas both Akropolites and Theodore II state that they were removed, respectively, from “Macedonia” (Akropolites uses the word “Macedonia” to include the Marica valley) and from the “West,” and sent eastward. A passage from Akropolites suggests that Gregoras was mistaken, that the Cumans who remained in Europe never served in the Nikaian army and that Nikaian authorities had very little control over them. Around 1255 a Nikaian force in Didymoteichon was given orders not to engage the Bulgarians “if indeed [the Bulgarians], taking Scyths [Cumans] in alliance, should rouse them against the enemies [the Nikaian forces].”⁵⁸ But later, when the Bulgarian ruler himself had induced the Cumans to invade and pillage Thrace, the generals in Didymoteichon forgot their orders, left the town, and suffered a serious defeat in a battle that set heavily armed Nikaian cavalry against around four thousand Cuman archers (Akropolites, 125–26). Since Akropolites notes that these Cumans passed by Adrianople (at that time on the Bulgaro-Nikaian frontier) on their way into Thrace, these Cumans must have lived on the frontier. Because of their long association with the Bulgarians, there is little possibility that they had been transformed into Nikaian troops of any kind; Akropolites clearly regarded them as a volatile element on the frontier.⁵⁹ Thus, it would seem then that Vatatzes succeeded in transplanting only some of the Cumans to Asia. Once removed from the influence of the Bulgarians, they became reliable soldiers and obedient subjects of the emperor. The rest remained in Europe and the most Vatatzes could do was restrict them to the Bulgarian frontier area, perhaps hoping that they might serve as a buffer against a Bulgarian invasion.

According to Gregoras, the Cumans that went to

⁵⁶ *Georgii Acropolitae Opera*, ed. A. Heisenberg, I (Leipzig, 1903), 53–54 and 65 (hereafter Akropolites). F. I. Uspenskij, in *ŽMNP* 225 (1883), 339: καὶ γὰρ τὸ πρὶν ἐκ τῆς δυτικῆς καὶ τῶν δυτικῶν χωρῶν ἀποσπᾶσας τὸν Σκύθην, τῇ ἐῷ ἔνθα δοῦλα τὰ τοῦτου γεννήματα συνεισήγαγες, καὶ ἀνταλλάξας τέκνα τὰ Περσικά, δεσμεῖς τούτων τὰς ἀντιστάσεις πρὸς τὰς δυσμὰς ἀσφαλῶς (cited by Ostrogorski, *Féodalité*, 62). The Cumans were not newcomers to the empire; they had served in the Byzantine army since the reign of Alexios I Komnenos, and at the end of the 12th century some were settled in the Rhodope as pronoiars. See C. Asdracha, *La région des Rhodopes aux XIIIe et XIVe siècles* (Athens, 1976), 80–82, with bibliography; and also G. Ostrogorski, “Još jednom o proniarima Kumanima,” *Zbornik Vladimira Mošina* (Belgrade, 1977), 63–74. For more references to Cumans, see Gy. Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica*, 2nd ed. (Berlin, 1958), II, 167–68.

⁵⁷ E.g., see Ostrogorski, *Pronija*, 41 (= *Féodalité*, 62); idem, *History of the Byzantine State*, rev. ed. (New Brunswick, N.J., 1969), 442; Charanis, “Social Structure,” 133; Mutaččiev, “Vojniški,” 556; Asdracha, *Rhodopes*, 81 and 242–43; Angold, *Byzantine Government*, 105; and J. Langdon, *John III Ducas Vatatzes' Byzantine Imperium in Anatolian Exile*, dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles (Ann Arbor, 1979), 249–50.

⁵⁸ Akropolites, 123, lines 20–22: . . . προσετείχαι δὲ αὐτοῖς μηδ' ὅλως εἰς μάχην ἐγκαταστήναι τοῖς πολέμοις, εἴπερ κατὰ τούτων ὁρμήσαιεν, Σκύθας προσλαβόντες εἰς συμμαχίαν.

⁵⁹ Angold, *Byzantine Government*, 188–89, interprets these events to mean the Cumans “deserted to the Bulgarians.”

Asia were settled in the Maiandros valley and in "Phrygia" (to Gregoras, this is the region to the east of Philadelphieia). If Gregoras' geography is accurate, then these Cumans lived in the highland frontiers, probably practicing the same mixture of agriculture and transhumance as the indigenous highlanders of Anatolia, and similarly serving as a buffer between Nikaian farmers and Turkish nomads. On the other hand, two documents from 1270 or 1285 mention a community of Cumans who had been living outside Smyrna.⁶⁰

The Cumans participated in the various European campaigns of the Laskarid and Palaiologan emperors from 1242 through 1292.⁶¹ Presumably they were mustered out of their settlements for each campaign and afterward returned to them, though there is no evidence to support this.⁶² However, it requires little imagination to see that their usefulness lay in the fact that, as inhabitants of the empire, they were available for service on demand, and since they were an unsophisticated, war-loving people, evidently holding their settlements, at least ostensibly, on condition of military service, their participation in campaigns incurred little cost to the treasury.

In the fourteenth century a new group of Cumans arrived on the Byzantine scene. These were some two thousand Cuman soldiers, from Dalmatia, lent to Michael IX by King Milutin of Serbia sometime between 1312 and 1320. After Michael IX's death in 1320, Milutin requested the return of these allied auxiliary troops, but in light of the imminent civil war between the Andronikoi, this request was ignored.⁶³ In the meantime the two thousand Cumans were settled in Thrace, but we

do not know on what terms.⁶⁴ There is some evidence that these two thousand Cumans participated in the civil wars of the 1320s, perhaps on the side of Andronikos III. In December 1327, when the younger Andronikos assembled his army at Didymoteichon, Kantakouzenos reports that everyone appeared except for these Cumans because Andronikos II, fearing that they were plotting with the Mongols, had ordered that they be transplanted from Thrace to Lemnos, Thasos, and Lesbos.⁶⁵ What became of them on these islands is not known. These Cumans, then, may have been smallholding soldiers, but we cannot say this with any certainty.

Thelematarioi

Immediately following the reconquest of Constantinople, Michael VIII created a number of groups of smallholding soldiers. One of these, called "Thelematarioi," were, like the Gasmouloi, products of the Byzantino-Latin interface. But unlike the Gasmouloi, the Thelematarioi were not the products of conjugal relations, but rather of necessary economic relations between Byzantines and Latins. According to Pachymeres:

There were some inhabitants from Chryseia and vicinity who, having loose convictions, were able to lean toward the Romans or toward the Italians, since the Romans put stock in their being Roman, while the Italians believed themselves safe from them because of their familiarity with them. They had no one else in whom to have faith. To banish these inhabitants might have brought on danger from [the area's] desolation. Hence they were between the Romans and the Italians, and because of this they were called Thelematarioi, cultivating the land outside the City, living there and remaining free from both sides since both needed their affection so they would not be harmed.⁶⁶

Thus, during the period of the Latin Empire, the Thelematarioi were free native farmers that lived around Constantinople and maintained their independence by serving as middlemen in the eco-

⁶⁰MM IV, 165–68; P. Charanis, "On the Ethnic Composition of Byzantine Asia Minor in the Thirteenth Century," *Προσφορὰ εἰς Στ. Π. Κυριακίδην* (Thessaloniki, 1953), 144–46; Angold, *Byzantine Government*, 105.

⁶¹Akropolites, 65–66, 139, 151, 169, and 182; Pachymeres, ed. Failler, I, 191, 271, and II, 403 (Bonn ed., I, 137, 205, and 310); Gregoras, I, 83 and 111; *Chronicle of the Morea*, ed. J. Schmitt (London, 1904), verses 3606–7, 3703–5, and 9086–87; Angold, *Byzantine Government*, 292; D. Geanakoplos, *Emperor Michael Palaeologus and the West* (Cambridge, Mass., 1959), 65, 67, 69, 92–93, 229, and 282–83; Laiou, *Constantinople*, 40–41.

⁶²Some Cumans, however, served as standing troops, evidently mercenaries. These appear as a distinct group only once, but very significantly, at the time of Michael VIII's election to the regency in 1258. After the Latin mercenaries were consulted in the matter, the Cumans present at court offered in turn their opinion in good Greek, which implies that these Cumans spent considerable time in the company of Greek speakers: Akropolites, 158, lines 18–21 (and cf. 120–21); Angold, *Byzantine Government*, 105 and 188; Geanakoplos, *Michael*, 42.

⁶³Kantakouzenos, I, 35; Laiou, *Constantinople*, 282.

⁶⁴Oikonomidès, "Compagnies," 365, suggests they might have been transformed into pronoïars of the soldier-company type.

⁶⁵Kantakouzenos, I, 259.5–18; D. Nicol, *The Byzantine Family of Kantakouzenos* (Washington, D.C., 1968), 152 note 44; Asdracha, *Rhodopes*, 82; Haldon, "Limnos," 178 (note 1 above); cf. Dölger, *Regesten*, no. 2586. L. Mavromatis, *La fondation de l'empire serbe: Le kralj Milutin* (Thessaloniki, 1978), 75, first discerned the connection between these two passages from Kantakouzenos, here and in the note above.

⁶⁶Pachymeres, ed. Failler, I, 157, lines 12–20 (Bonn ed., I, 110.10–20). Failler, I, 157 note 5, cannot identify this Chryseia, but places it to the west of the land walls, which apparently rules out an identification with Chrysopolis (Skoutari) on the Asian side of the Bosphoros.

nomic activity between the Nikaian and Latin territories. This passage from Pachymeres also explains the origin of the name. *Thelematarios* (from θέλημα “will”) had nothing to do with their being “volunteer” soldiers, as has often been thought.⁶⁷ On the contrary, Pachymeres indicates that they were known as Thelematarioi in the period prior to the reconquest of 1261, during which time they clearly were not soldiers. Indeed, their advantageous position could only be maintained insofar as they abstained from taking sides. *Thelematarios* simply means that they did as they pleased, declaring no allegiance and having no master. Only in this sense were they “free-willed.”⁶⁸

Apparently, at least some of the Thelematarioi remained Byzantines at heart, for they played a significant role in the recovery of Constantinople. Led by one Koutritzakes, they informed the general Alexios Strategopoulos about the defenses of the City, and some of them, including the priest Lakeras and a certain Glavatos, were among the first to surmount the City’s walls.⁶⁹ Once Constantinople was retaken, Michael VIII rewarded the Thelematarioi. “Because of their zeal and goodwill, land good for producing fruit and excellent for everything sown on it was delivered in hereditary title to the Thelematarioi.”⁷⁰

Evidently Michael’s grants of land to the Thelematarioi were connected to an obligation of military service, because the Thelematarioi were formed into a special military group that is seen participating in the battle of Apros in 1305. This would mean that they had become a hereditary

group of imperial servants, because it had to be their sons and grandsons that fought at Apros. According to Pachymeres, “the Vlachikon and whatever there was from the Thelematarioi were welded together, and after a fashion [Michael IX] drew it up to form a rearguard under the Megas Hetaireiarches” Doukas (Bonn ed., II, 549.10–19). Since Gregoras’ account of the same operation (I, 230–31) states that, aside from Tourkopouloi, Alans, and Macedonian and Thracian cavalry, most of the forces were foot troops, P. Mutaččiev (“Vojniški,” 620) reasonably concluded that the Thelematarioi were likewise infantry. Logistically it was indeed sound practice to station reliable foot troops in the rear. If the Thelematarioi were infantry troops, their landholdings would have been small. Thus, the Thelematarioi appear to be a hereditary group of smallholding soldiers.

The documentary sources contain a number of references to Thelematarioi, but they unfortunately do not do much to corroborate Pachymeres on their economic status and on the nature of their landholdings. We read that in 1318 “some of the Thelematarioi” were called as witnesses in a case involving an accusation of Bogomilism. The anonymity of these men and the fact that they are identified by a group description suggests that they were a modest group of imperial servants, not unlike those that fought at Apros.⁷¹ Later, in 1349, John VI Kantakouzenos issued a chrysobull in favor of Vatopedi that confirmed Arsenios Tzampalakon’s donation of the Psychosostria monastery in Constantinople to Vatopedi. The emperor further granted that Psychosostria’s dependency called Hagios Elias no longer pay eight hyperpyra yearly “to Katakalon from the Thelematarioi soldiers” (πρὸς τὸν ἀπὸ τῶν θεληματαρῶν στρατιωτῶν Κατακαλῶν), which had been mandated by a chrysobull of Andronikos II, and he formulaically ordered that no one including “the said Thelematarios Katakalon” bother the monastery about these eight hyperpyra. Katakalon was therefore a military man who had been receiving an *epiteleia* of eight hyperpyra yearly from Hagios Elias for more than twenty-one years.⁷²

While this document shows that the Thelema-

⁶⁷ *Schatzkammer*, p. 125, and F. Dölger, *Sechs byzantinische Praktika des 14. Jahrhunderts für das Athoskloster Iveron* (Munich, 1949), p. 123 (“freiwilliger Soldat”), and Mutaččiev, “Vojniški,” 620 (“dobrovolčeski otređi”). Geanakoplos, *Michael*, 95, misleadingly translates the word as “Voluntaries.”

⁶⁸ As Geanakoplos, *Michael*, 95, notes, the adjective θεληματάρχοι is found in the *Chronicle of the Morea*, verses 605 and 6935, to describe undisciplined Frankish and German troops.

⁶⁹ Pachymeres, ed. Failler, I, 191–203 (Bonn ed., I, 138–48); Geanakoplos, *Michael*, 105–10. An anonymous 14th-century poem (in J. Müller, “Byzantinische Analekten,” SBMünch, Phil.-hist. Kl. 9 [1852], 366–89, line 571) gives their number as five hundred (cited by Geanakoplos, *Michael*, 107).

⁷⁰ Pachymeres, ed. Failler, I, 221, lines 20–23 (Bonn ed., I, 164.1–5): . . . κληροδοτεῖν τοῖς ἐν τέλει, ἐκτός τε καὶ ἐντὸς πόλεως, τόπους εἰς γεωργίαν, ἐξηρημένης τῆς εἰς χάριν γονικευθείσης τοῖς θεληματάρχοις τῆς ἐκεῖνων σπουδῆς καὶ εὐνοίας ἕνεκα, γῆς ἀγαθῆς εἰς καρπογονίαν καὶ ἀρετῆς εἰς πᾶν τὸ καταβαλλόμενον. My translation follows the interpretations of the passage found in H. Ahrweiler, *Byzance et la mer* (Paris, 1966), 337, and Geanakoplos, *Michael*, 124, but I am not altogether sure that the verb ἐξαίρω should not be interpreted in its modern sense, the meaning of the passage thereby being that the hereditary lands of the Thelematarioi were exempted from Michael’s redistribution process.

⁷¹ MM I, 135, line 32; Darrouzès, *Regestes*, no. 2084.

⁷² Arkadios Vatopedinos, Γράμματα τῆς ἐν Κωνσταντινουπόλει μονῆς τῆς θεοτόκου τῆς Ψυχσοστροφίας, *BNJ* 13 (1937), no. 3, p. 308, ι–ια’, lines 125–27 and 138–39. On the document, see Dölger, *Regesten*, no. 2956 (and cf. *ibid.*, no. 2611) and H. Ahrweiler, “L’épitéleia dans le cartulaire de Lemviotissa,” *Byzantion* 24 (1954), 90 note 2. In Dölger’s summary of this document (*Schatzkammer*, no. 43–44 III, with notes), the key phrase is read

tarioi continued to exist as a military division in the vicinity of Constantinople well into the fourteenth century, it tends to broaden the range of positions held by Thelematarioi in the socioeconomic spectrum. Even though Katakalon is cited with but one name and no title, not even *kyr*, he nevertheless was important enough to merit the attention of an emperor. Since Andronikos II granted him the eight-hyperpyra epiteleia through a chrysobull, it is arguable, though by no means certain, that the origin of this epiteleia was not a simple land sale, as in the case of many epiteleiai, but an imperial grant of pronoia, of which one element was this epiteleia. Since eight hyperpyra was too low to be the income of even a foot soldier, Katakalon must have had additional, unknown sources of income.

All of the other references to Thelematarioi in the documentary sources deal with people that bore "Thelematarios" as a name: (a) In 1317 a praktikon mentions Zographou's possession of a field of three modioi in a place called Dragattia near the village of Hierissos that it had acquired prior to 1279 through a donation τοῦ Θεληματάρη or Θεληματάρη.⁷³ (b) Around 1290 a man sold a field to the hegoumenos of Lavra in a place called Proavlox, about five km from Hierissos. The field was located πλησίον Γεωργίου τοῦ Θεληματάρη. *Periorismo* of 1300 and 1321 of Lavra's landholdings in Proavlox then mention the "rights of Thelematares."⁷⁴ (c) An inventory of Lavra's paroikoi in the katepanikion of Hierissos from around 1300 notes the monastery's possession of a vineyard plot (*ampelion stasikon*) of 1 1/4 modioi "from the dowry of Thelematares" located in the village of Hierissos (*Lavra* II, no. 91, lines 243–44). (d) A 1301 praktikon mentions a field Iviron owned πλησίον τοῦ Θεληματάρη (Dölger, *Sechs*, A 249). (e) In 1320 Chilandar was granted ownership of a field in a place called Longos near Hierissos (not to be confused with the homonymous village on the Longos peninsula) πλησίον τοῦ Θεληματάρη καὶ τοῦ Ἀναστασίου (Petit, *Chilandar*, no. 55, lines 19–20). (f) And a praktikon made between 1320 and 1338 states that Xenophon owned a piece of land (*aulotopion*) of one modios, at an uncertain location, that

was donated ἀπὸ τοῦ Θεληματάρου καὶ Θεριανοῦ.⁷⁵

Except for the property in the last reference, all of these properties are known to have been in the vicinity of the town of Hierissos. It seems that we have before us two generations of one or two families named Thelematarios (usually simplified to the more demotic Thelemataris/-es) that were holding land from before 1279 until at least 1321. These people held at least five discrete parcels of land, though those with known areas were very small (one to three modioi). Further, the frequent omission of given names suggests that the family (or families) was not a particularly distinguished one. While we may be tempted to conclude that someone in one of these families had been a Thelematarios—the name, in the same class as Tzakon, Vasmoulos, and Prosalentes, is simply too peculiar to think otherwise—there is no real evidence with which to connect the Thelematarios family and the military Thelematarioi.

Michael VIII's Tzakones

After the reconquest of Constantinople, Michael VIII undertook the essential task of strengthening the City's defenses by refortifying its walls and recreating a Byzantine navy. As marines, he initially employed the Gasmouloi, men of mixed Byzantine and Latin parentage living in and around Constantinople, but apparently the need for soldiers to fortify the capital and man the fleet was such that Michael soon had to look elsewhere. According to an often-cited passage from Pachymeres, Michael "had great need to settle the City with light-armed soldiers, and so he had many Lakones, arriving from the Morea, settled as natives, distributing places near the City. Bestowing the yearly pay, he also supplied them with many other liberalities, and used them for many [things] inside and outside [Constantinople], for they displayed worthy behavior in the wars."⁷⁶ Accompanying the Protos-

differently, but Arkadios' reading is sure: see *Schatzkammer*, pl. 43b, third line from bottom.

⁷³ *Zographou*, no. 54, lines 160–61 (1317) = Mošin, "Akti," 184. The Slavic translation of the praktikon renders the name as ФЕЛИМАТА. *Zographou*, no. 52, lines 42–43 (1279); on the date, see J. Lefort, *Actes d'Esphigménou* (Paris, 1973), p. 78.

⁷⁴ *Lavra* II, no. 84, line 7; no. 90, line 368; and no. 108, line 720.

⁷⁵ *Xénophon*, App. II, line 124; the editor (p. 232) thinks the property was located around the villages of Phournia and Psalis on the Longos peninsula.

⁷⁶ Pachymeres, ed. Failler, I, 253, lines 5–10 (Bonn ed., I, 188.2–8): Τὸ δ' ἐλαφροῖς τῶν στρατιωτῶν οἰκίζειν τὴν πόλιν καὶ λίαν ἐπ' ἀνάγκης εἶχεν· ὅπου γε καὶ Λάκωνι πλείστοις, ὕστερον ἐκ τοῦ Μορέου ἀφιγμένοις, ἐπιμερίσας τόπους, ἐπὶ τῆς πόλεως παρεῖχε κατοικεῖν ὡς αὐτόχθονοι καὶ, ὁγῶναις ἐτησίοις δωροῦμενος καὶ πλείστοις ἄλλοις φιλοτιμήμασιν. . . . Geanakoplos, *Michael*, 123 and 126; cf. Ahrweiler, *La Mer*, 357 note 1 and 362. See also H. Antoniadis-Bibicou, *Études d'histoire maritime de Byzance* (Paris, 1966), 33–34, and especially S. Caratzas, *Les Tzakones* (Berlin, 1976). On the renewal of the fleet, see Geanakoplos, *Michael*, 125–27, and Ahrweiler, *La Mer*, 336 ff.

trator Alexios Philanthropenos on the first expedition of the new fleet in 1262 or 1263 was “the Lakonikon whom the ruler transplanted from the Peloponnesos.”⁷⁷ Later, when describing the composition of a naval expedition in 1268, Pachymeres writes, “many others [were] from the Lakones whom they called Tzakones, corrupting [their name], whom the ruler transplanted with their wives and children to Constantinople from the Morea and the western parts, and who were numerous and warlike.”⁷⁸ Gregoras, too, paraphrasing Pachymeres, points out the peculiar ambiguity of the name of these soldiers: “Joining the [Gasmouloi were] the Lakones, a sea army in arms, coming to the emperor from the Peloponnesos, whom the common spoken language called Tzakones” (I, 98.10–13).

In the late Byzantine period the word “tzakon” had a number of senses, of which two interest us here. First, it was applied, without any ethnic or geographic significance, to a variety of light-armed soldiers and guards. Further, it was applied as an ethnic label to the inhabitants of the southeastern Morea. Michael VIII’s Tzakones, or Lakones, as Pachymeres and Gregoras thought they should properly be called, were those men that he transplanted from the Morea and probably elsewhere to serve as marines, light-armed troops to guard the walls of the City, and, as we learn from other sources, even as a division of palace guards.⁷⁹ Although there is no need to think that Michael’s Tzakones were exclusively recruited from the population of Lakonia, or even the Morea, Pachymeres clearly thought that the majority of these men had come from the eastern Peloponnesos. Thus, Michael’s Tzakones were tzakones by occupation and, at least to some extent, tzakones by ethnicity.

Michael VIII’s Tzakones were clearly smallholding soldiers. All the necessary elements are present: they were “settled as natives” with their families, they received “places near Constantinople,” and since they were light-armed, we can assume their landholdings were relatively small. The only unusual element, the “yearly pay” they were to receive, is very significant in that it shows that the distinction between mercenary and smallholding

soldier could be blurred. A letter of Gregory of Cyprus from the 1280s, describing a criminal case of rape, breaking-and-entering, and disorderly conduct in which a group of Tzakones was implicated, supports Pachymeres’ contention that the Tzakones received pay by its indirect reference to these eight particular Tzakones as mercenaries (*misthophorikon*) serving for pay.⁸⁰ Further, since more than twenty years had passed between the time Michael’s Tzakones were first brought to Constantinople and the time Gregory wrote the letter, and since the detailed exploits of Gregory’s Tzakones do not seem to be those of middle-aged men, it is highly likely that these Tzakones were not members of the original Tzakones contingents but, rather, their sons, who were either minors when transplanted with their parents or born in Constantinople. From this we may conclude with a fair degree of certainty that the profession of Michael VIII’s Tzakones was, at least in some cases, hereditary.

That this kind of mercenary service should be hereditary is not surprising in light of the fact that the original Tzakones had received not only pay, but, as Pachymeres tell us, “places (*topoi*) near the City.” While these may have been rather small and inadequate for substantial farming (we note that Pachymeres does not employ the word “land”), they at least provided a home that the emperor could treat as a conditional grant in order to ensure continued service by the original Tzakones’ heirs.⁸¹ When Pseudo-Kodinos wrote that the arms and war horse of a mercenary who died childless were to be returned to the *megas domestikos*, he was affirming both the frequent conditional nature of grants to mercenaries and the frequently overlooked hereditary element in mercenary service itself.⁸² Probably these were conscious imperial policies intended to ensure a constant supply of resident mercenaries and to dissuade mercenaries from leaving their jobs to seek employment elsewhere.

Michael’s Tzakones are mentioned by name in

⁷⁷ Pachymeres, ed. Failler, I, 277, lines 20–21 (Bonn ed., I, 209. 7–12). On the date, see Pachymeres, ed. Failler, I, 270 note 3.

⁷⁸ Pachymeres, ed. Failler, II, 401–3 (Bonn ed., I, 309. 14–22).

⁷⁹ On this last function, see M. Bartusis, “The Palace Guard in Byzantium after 1204,” *Byzantion* 60 (1990).

⁸⁰ Eustratiades, *Gregory*, no. 166, pp. 162–64; M. Bartusis, “Brigandage in the Late Byzantine Empire,” *Byzantion* 51 (1981), 396–97.

⁸¹ Mutafčiev, “Vojniški,” 527, uses this evidence to suggest that it was characteristic of the late Byzantine period to grant “lands” to mercenaries. This is true, but one needs to distinguish between agricultural land and a simple home with garden. In the present case it is impossible to know which of the two is implied by Pachymeres.

⁸² *Pseudo-Kodinos, Traité des offices*, ed. J. Verpeaux (Paris, 1966), 251, lines 14–18.

regard to only two naval expeditions, Philanthropenos' Morean campaigns of 1262 or 1263, and of 1268,⁸³ though it does seem likely that throughout the 1260s and 1270s these Tzakones, together with the Gasmouloi, formed the basic Byzantine marine force. Around 1285 there was a major turn of events, when, as a budget-cutting move, Andronikos II's advisors convinced him to reduce the size of the fleet. While Pachymeres speaks only generally of the "mercenaries on the ships" and Gregoras only mentions the impoverishment of the Gasmouloi, there can be little doubt that the Tzakones, to the extent that they relied on their pay, were also seriously affected by Andronikos II's decision. A letter of Gregory of Cyprus from around 1285–86 that speaks of the impoverishment of "Dorians and Peloponnesians" settled at Herakleia in Thrace may be a reference to these Tzakones.⁸⁴ Indeed, with the exception of Pseudo-Kodinos' brief discussion of the Tzakones as a palace guard, all mention of Tzakones in the area of Constantinople ends after the 1280s.⁸⁵ But since at least some Gasmouloi survived in their occupation after 1285, we should not rule out the possibility that some of Michael's Tzakones did so as well.

Prosalentai

In addition to marines, Michael's new fleet required rowers. Pachymeres writes that Michael "outfitted and built a fleet and [as] rowers (προσελῶντες), he assigned more than a thousand from the lands (ἐκ τῶν χωρῶν)."⁸⁶ "From the lands" is Pachymeres' way of saying that the rowers did not come from depopulated Constantinople. As an inducement to enlist, Michael offered land. "In the order of servants to them [the marines], as if one might say to row ships forward (νηῶν εἰς τὸ πρόσθεν ἐλάται), were the Proselontes from all over; to the good and greatest part [of these] the ruler assigned lands near the shore everywhere."⁸⁷ During the first expedition of the new fleet in 1262 or 1263, Pachymeres writes that "those called Pro-

selontes were assigned alone to the rowing."⁸⁸ Even though the naval activities of the Proselontes—or Prosalentai, according to the form of the word that appears in the documents—like those of Michael VIII's Tzakones, are noted only in regard to Philanthropenos' two expeditions to the Morea in the 1260s, they too probably participated in all of the naval campaigns throughout the 1260s and 1270s.

Despite the reduction in the size of the Byzantine fleet after 1285 pursuant to the budget-cutting policies of Andronikos II's advisors, the Prosalentai are found in Constantinople as late as 1296.⁸⁹ Kantakouzenos and Gregoras do not mention the Prosalentai by name, but this probably means little except that these historians were showing their usual disdain for the technical nomenclature of the day. Where rowers are encountered in later sources, we may still be dealing with Prosalentai.⁹⁰ The documentary sources do in fact suggest that the Prosalentai as an institution lasted well into the second half of the fourteenth century. A survey of the references to the Prosalentai in the documentary sources confirms Pachymeres' statement that they were assigned lands near the sea, while also supplying important information about the nature of these landholdings and the ubiquity of the institution of Prosalentai.

(a) Lemnos. In surveys of Lavra's possessions on the island of Lemnos from 1284, 1304, and 1361, one particular border is repeatedly spoken of as formed by "the rights of the Prosalentai from Vouneada" (τὰ δίκαια τῶν ἀπὸ τῶν Βουνεάδων προσαλεντῶν).⁹¹ The nature of the landholdings of these Prosalentai from Vouneada, a village in northwest Lemnos, where Lavra had possessions of its own, is uncertain, although it is clear that they were not located in Vouneada itself, but at a place to the north, closer to the sea.⁹² The persist-

⁸³ Pachymeres, ed. Failler, I, 277, and II, 403 (Bonn ed., I, 209 and 309).

⁸⁴ Eustratiades, *Gregory*, no. 149 (= S. Eustratiades in *Ἐκκλησιαστικὸς Φάρος* 4 [1909], pp. 105–6), cited by V. Laurent, *Les registres des actes du patriarchat de Constantinople*, I, fasc. 4 (Paris, 1971), no. 1493.

⁸⁵ Tzakones did, of course, continue to exist in the provinces; see Bartusis, "Urban Guard Service."

⁸⁶ Pachymeres, ed. Failler, I, 223, lines 5–7 (Bonn ed., I, 164.15–16).

⁸⁷ Pachymeres, ed. Failler, II, 403, lines 2–4 (Bonn ed., I, 309.19–22).

⁸⁸ Pachymeres, ed. Failler, I, 277, lines 19–20 (Bonn ed., I, 209.7–12). Although rowers, the Prosalentai were commanded in military duties (rowing warships) by Byzantine officers, and therefore fit my definition of "soldier." Indeed, they were no less soldiers than the humbler citizens of Periclean Athens.

⁸⁹ Pachymeres, Bonn ed., II, 237–38 and 240.

⁹⁰ See the comments of K.-P. Matschke, "Johannes Kantakouzenos, Alexios Apokaukos und die byzantinische Flotte in der Bürgerkriegsperiode 1340–1355," *Actes du XIVe Congrès international des études byzantines* (Bucharest, 1975), II, 204 note 52.

⁹¹ *Lavra* II, no. 73, lines 9–10 (1284), and notes; no. 74, line 6 (1284); no. 77, lines 11–12 (1284?); no. 99, line 10 (1304); *Lavra* III, no. 139, line 13 (1361); also Haldon, "Limnos," 166 and note 9. On such "rights," see Laiou-Thomadakis, *Peasant Society*, 50–52.

⁹² On the location of Vouneada, see *Lavra* IV, p. 141 note 502, and the map in Haldon, "Limnos," 190 (a couple of km NW of the town of Atsiki). For Lavra's possessions at Vouneada, see

ence of these “rights” over an eighty-year period is interesting. By 1361 we are viewing third- or fourth-generation Prosalentai, indicating that the institution itself was remarkably stable. And stability probably means that the vocation and landholding of a Prosalentes was hereditary.

(b) Kassandreia. At the beginning of a 1333 praktikon for Xenophon the apographeus states that he had been ordered to make a fiscal assessment of the properties of προσαλεντικῶν, ἐκκλησιαστικῶν, μοναστηριακῶν, χρυσοβουλλάτων καὶ λοιπῶν ἀπάντων on the Kassandreia peninsula (*Xenophon*, no. 22, line 2). Similar phrases appear in many praktika, but in this one particular case the landholdings of Prosalentai are cited, along with those of churches, monasteries, and the recipients of chrysobulls. The inclusion of Prosalentai within this list of other property owners strongly suggests that the Prosalentai, at least at Kassandreia, if not generally, were not dependent peasants, but free landowners.

The landholdings of the Prosalentai around Xenophon’s possessions at Sivri on Kassandreia seem to have been considerable and, interestingly enough, show an increase from 1333 to 1338. The *periorismos* of Xenophon’s 1,800 modioi at Sivri, contained in the 1333 praktikon, is quite thorough in noting the neighboring “rights” of other landowners that bordered the monastery’s land. As the circuit is followed around this land, on one side was Xenophon’s land and on the other were, in order, the rights of the monastery of Akapniou, the rights of an anonymous megas stratopedarches (three mentions), the rights of a certain Glavas and the rights of the same megas stratopedarches, the “prosalentika rights” (six mentions), and the rights of the monastery of Vatopedi (three mentions).⁹³ The prosalentika rights lie adjacent to Xenophon’s land for nearly half of the printed periorismos text.

Constantine Makrenos’ *sigilliōdes gramma* of January 1338, confirming Xenophon’s possession of

all its lands, includes a modified periorismos of the same 1,800 modioi at Sivri. This survey is not quite as fastidious as the earlier one, and the differences in vocabulary and phrasing are sufficient to suggest that this periorismos had been newly made. Here, as in 1333, Xenophon’s land borders first on the rights of the Akapniou monastery, but then, replacing the first mention of the rights of the megas stratopedarches are “the rights of the village called *tou Opsizontos*, that is, of the prosalentika” (καὶ τῶν δικαίων τοῦ χωρίου τοῦ λεγομένου Ὀψίζοντος, ἥτοι τῶν προσαλεντικῶν).⁹⁴ In fact, the rights of the megas stratopedarches do not appear at all in this periorismos. The rights of Glavas are similarly not mentioned. Instead, the passage of the periorismos that had spoken of the rights of the megas stratopedarches and Glavas in 1333, now begins instead with a reference to prosalentika rights. Otherwise the prosalentika rights mentioned in the 1333 periorismos still existed in 1338 (*Xenophon*, no. 25, line 52). The 1338 periorismos concludes its references to bordering lands with the same mention of the rights of Vatopedi as in the 1333 document. Thus, between 1333 and 1338, the lands of the anonymous megas stratopedarches and the aforementioned Glavas were transferred to Prosalentai. The reason for this is not known. While simple sale cannot be ruled out, a historically plausible explanation is that the ranks of the Prosalentai were being increased by Andronikos III for the sake of his numerous military campaigns during the 1330s. Since Prosalentai were most useful when settled by the sea, it is possible that imperial authorities ordered an exchange or confiscation of the lands of the megas stratopedarches and Glavas. In any event, the increase in the size of prosalentika holdings at Sivri was considerable. Using as a crude gauge the relative space in the text given to the common border of Xenophon’s land with that of the Prosalentai, the Prosalentai now had a common border with more than two-thirds of Xenophon’s land. Since the monastery held 1,800 modioi, the prosalentika holdings must have amounted to at least several hundred modioi.⁹⁵

(c) Longos (Akros). The Prosalentai also had

e.g., *Lavra* III, no. 139, lines 100 ff. On the location of the prosalentika rights, see *Lavra* IV, pp. 135, 137, and 138 note 481. Further, from a praktikon for the possessions of a dependency of Lavra on Lemnos from 1355, there is a list of monastic lands including “land in various places from the *exaleimmatikē hypostasis* of the Prosalentes Eustratios Chiotes (προσαλέντου Εὐστρατίου τοῦ Χιώτου)”: *Lavra* III, no. 136, line 29. The location of this property is uncertain.

⁹³ *Xenophon*, no. 22, lines 20–30, and on Xenophon’s holdings on Kassandreia, see pp. 31–33. The megas stratopedarches cannot be identified; a possible candidate is George Choumnos, *epitropos* of Thessaloniki in 1328: Kantakouzenos, I, 268. 4–5.

⁹⁴ *Xenophon*, no. 25, line 48, and cf. no. 22, lines 13–14. This village “Opsizontos” evidently is only otherwise attested in a false copy of *Xenophon*, no. 1 (see p. 61 of the edition).

⁹⁵ This is a worst-case estimate assuming that (1) half the monastery’s land bordered on the sea, and (2) in depth, the prosalentika holdings averaged no more than an improbable one hundred meters. This yields a total area for the prosalentika holdings of about two hundred modioi.

holdings on the peninsula adjacent to Kassandreia. Consisting of some *exaleimmatika stasia* in Psalida, they do not seem to have been as extensive as their holdings on Kassandreia. In Constantine Makrenos' 1338 *sigilliōdes gramma*, the story of these stasia is told (*Xénophon*, no. 25, lines 109–10). Originally they had belonged to Xenophon; then, "not a few years ago they were taken away and assigned to Prosalentai" (ἀπεσπάσθη δὲ πρὸ χρόνων οὐκ ὀλίγων καὶ ἀποκατέστη εἰς προσαλέντας); and after this they were given to Thessalonikan soldiers, who finally donated them back to the monastery. It is impossible to say when the Prosalentai actually held these stasia, but it is likely that they had lost them prior to 1320, when we see "some stratiotai and paroikoi" holding property in Psalida, which a falsified copy of an earlier act, fabricated between 1300 and 1320, describes as *exaleimmatika stasia*.⁹⁶ Nothing prevents the phrase "not a few years ago" from referring to the reign of Michael VIII, and so all that can be said is that Prosalentai held *exaleimmatika stasia* at Psalida on Longos sometime between 1261 and 1320.

(d) Popolia. A 1317 praktikon for Lavra's metochion of Aeidarokastron at Prinaron, located in the katepanikion of Popolia, to the east of the mouth of the Strymon, lists among the *eleutheroi paroikoi* belonging to the metochion "the widow Kale Prosalentina with son John and a dwelling." The next praktikon extant for these same holdings, probably from 1321, lists "the widow Prosalento with son John, a dwelling, and a *telos* of [illegible]." ⁹⁷ Evidently someone in this woman's family had been a Prosalentes, and while we cannot say how or when the family came upon hard times (though it could have been as far back as 1285 when Andronikos II decided to neglect the fleet), Kale in 1317 was a very poor dependent peasant. This may serve as evidence for the precariousness of the position of Prosalentai.

It is now possible to make a few generalizations about the landholdings and status of the Prosalentai. First, Pachymeres was quite right when he wrote that the rowers were given lands near the shores. The documentary sources show them holding lands in the katepanikia of Kassandreia, Akros, Popolia, and on the isle of Lemnos, and, of course, we may assume some were also holding possessions around Constantinople⁹⁸ and else-

where. Second, there is only one rationale for giving rowers land near the shores, and this is that they should live near their work. Therefore, we can be sure that the Prosalentai lived on their landholdings. If the intention had been merely to ensure them an income, that is, to make them pronoiars of some kind, they could have been given lands anywhere. Third, the Prosalentai seem to have been a legal category of landowners with "rights" comparable to those of churches, monasteries, pronoiars, and other lay landlords. Fourth, they nevertheless were rowers, an occupation that was never the source of much status or material reward in the medieval centuries, and their position was not so secure that some of their members could not on occasion descend into the class of dependent peasants. Lastly, they were settled in groups that facilitated their rapid mustering. On Kassandreia the settlement was large enough to encompass more than an entire village.

The Prosalentai were therefore free peasants who lived on relatively modest landholdings in specifically designated settlements near the sea. They held their lands on condition of continued service as rowers for the fleet. No doubt regulations developed involving the frequency with which service could be demanded and the problem of the heritability of holdings that did not provide a man fit to row. But we know nothing of these matters, nor whether such service was organized on a communal or an individual basis. The Prosalentai may also have received cash—certainly at least rations⁹⁹—for the periods when they were on active duty, but Pachymeres' comment that Andronikos II's advisors were opposed to the outlay of public taxes for the mercenaries of the fleet may only apply to the marines, and not to the rowers. The Prosalentai held lands, and so they cannot be identified with those who Pachymeres says were left with nothing when the fleet was abandoned in 1285 and were forced to pursue "low crafts" (*vanausai technai*), desert to the Turks, or become pirates.¹⁰⁰ From Pachymeres' point of view the Prosalentai, as farmers, had always pursued "low crafts."

⁹⁹The evidence for this is derived from several 15th-century documents: Arkadios Vatopedinos, *Ἀγιορειτικά ἀνάλεκτα ἐκ τοῦ ἀρχείου τῆς μονῆς Βατοπεδίου*, Γρηγόριος ὁ Παλαμάς 3 (1919), no. 43, p. 433, lines 19–20; *Lavra* III, no. 162, line 24; *ibid.*, no. 167, line 23; and Mošin, "Akti," 166.

¹⁰⁰Pachymeres, Bonn ed., II, 70–71. Pachymeres speaks of these individuals as a *misthophorikon*, *stratiōtikon*, or *maximon*. None of these words need apply to rowers. Cf. Gregoras, I, 175–176, who notes only the ensuing difficulties for the Gas-mouloi.

⁹⁶*Xénophon*, no. 13, lines 118–19, and App. I, line 30.

⁹⁷*Lavra* II, no. 105, lines 19–20, and no. 112, line 17.

⁹⁸Cf. Pachymeres, ed. Failler, II, 543, lines 6–10 (Bonn ed., I, 425).

We are now in a position to define the concept of the smallholding soldier in late Byzantium. I would like to offer two different types of definition: a descriptive one, based on the attested historical characteristics of the four groups of smallholding soldiers that I have discussed, and another, more abstract definition, that takes into account the four groups, while, in a social scientific fashion, establishing parameters within which a soldier would need to fit in order to be considered a smallholding soldier.

On the basis of what we have been able to learn about the four groups of soldiers discussed, smallholding soldiers tended to form the lower end of the social spectrum of professional soldiers: light cavalry (Cumans), guards and marines (Tzakones), infantry (Thelematarioi), and rowers (Prosalentai). From this we may conclude that the lands with which they were associated were relatively modest. Further, smallholding soldiers generally lived in communities (at least the Cumans and the Prosalentai) and inhabited lands that were located in specific locations, often for convenience of mustering (at least the Prosalentai and the Tzakones). They cultivated their own land (the Cumans and Prosalentai certainly; the Tzakones and Thelematarioi probably). This contrasts with what we know of the typical *pronoia* soldier, who with his larger holdings did not farm, but, on an individual basis, acted as landlord and tax collector, frequently in out of the way places without strategic importance. The smallholding soldier is also distinguished by his more direct connection to the land. Since the *pronoia*'s direct relation was to the income produced by economic instruments and not to the instruments themselves, he was at least one step distant from the source of his income, a fact that played a role in establishing his higher social position (soldier-landlord, rather than soldier-farmer).

Further, all four of these groups of soldiers seem to have had hereditary military obligations that persisted through generations, though it is not clear whether these obligations followed the soldier or the soldier's property. The reference to "*prosalentika ktemata*" suggests that service as a *Prosalentes* was attached to the holding of particular military properties. It parallels the couple of references we have to "*tzakonikon*" property.¹⁰¹ On the other hand, the obligations on Michael VIII's Tzakones may have followed the individual (or his

family), because they were primarily mercenaries and their landholdings appear to have been modest. In fact, for both the Tzakones and the Cumans, the ethnic component attached to each group of soldiers makes it likely that military service was passed down through families. There is no evidence for or against the possibility that *Prosalentai* and *Thelematarioi*, legally or otherwise, alienated their holdings to others who fulfilled the necessary service.

The settling of soldiers in colonies is an interesting phenomenon, certainly not without precedent in the Roman and Byzantine worlds. We may hypothesize that emperors found this policy practical for several reasons. First, the practice clearly accommodated the social needs of less civilized peoples or recent immigrant groups. The Cumans and, to a lesser extent, the Tzakones could maintain their social organization within their communities, and the leaders of these groups similarly could maintain their prerogatives over their people once settled within the empire. Also, groups of smallholding soldiers living in communities or colonies facilitated their administration by the state. Mustering the troops could be accomplished without great effort, and the eternal problem of individual soldiers becoming too impoverished to serve could have been avoided through a communal obligation of military service. Finally, settling soldiers in groups allowed a greater specialization among smallholding, settled peoples. Since there was no need for all of them to share equally the roles of farmer and soldier, some could spend more time away from the land soldiering, while others concentrated on agriculture.

But were there smallholding soldiers aside from the examples I have cited? And, if so, did their characteristics differ from those of the four examples? Although I cannot securely identify any other soldiers in the late period as smallholding soldiers, the great diversity in the known forms of military organization and the creativity displayed by Byzantine leaders in organizing their defenses (even if ultimately unsuccessful) suggest that the probable answer to both questions is yes. It is no coincidence that the four examples of smallholding soldiers that I have cited should appear to be so similar. As large, newly created groups, they were noticed by the historians, without whose testimony their military status could not be determined, for the documentary references alone, as important as they are for confirming the histori-

¹⁰¹ See Oikonomides, "Compagnies," 357, and Bartusis, "Urban Guard Service."

ans, are insufficient to prove that the four groups of men were smallholding soldiers. Thus, there is every possibility that other groups of smallholding soldiers existed, as well as an entire category of smallholding soldiers that were settled, not in communities, but individually. This latter kind of soldier, with parallels in the middle Byzantine period, remains, to the best of my knowledge, unattested in the late period, and it seems that only serendipitous references in the texts of little-known documents will rescue its representatives from the shadows. Until then, we can only speculate about the range of forms that may have embraced the concept of the smallholding soldier. The example of Michael VIII's Tzakones who received land as well as pay suggests that hybrid categories of soldiers existed. Thus, a soldier whose livelihood was derived from a variety of sources was a smallholding soldier only to the degree that his means of livelihood was connected to a particular relationship with the land. And so, in order to get some idea of the parameters within which the institution of smallholding soldiers could exist, and to distinguish the smallholding soldier from other kinds of warriors, it is useful at this point to attempt to construct an abstract definition of the smallholding soldier.

Since we know so few details of the institution of smallholding soldiers in the late period, this is no easy matter. Any definition, though it need only be narrow enough to exclude the mercenary and the pronioia soldier, must be broad enough to include not only the attested forms of the institution, but also undocumented forms that logically *could* have existed and may, at a later date, be discovered. These requirements, plus other factors, explain why I have chosen to call this soldier the *smallholding* soldier, and not the "settled" soldier, the "peasant" soldier, or the "enrolled" soldier, epithets that have from time to time been employed, not entirely without justification, but in each case are less suitable than "smallholding." The adjective "settled" implies that the soldiers were newly established on specific properties, and that they themselves inhabited and cultivated these properties. While these characteristics, as far as I can tell, correctly describe the four groups of soldiers that we have been dealing with, at least in the first generation, they are not quite adequate for the second and later generations of these soldiers (who were not "settled" in the same sense as their fathers) nor for other kinds of smallholding soldiers that could have existed. For example, there is no difficulty in

imagining a smallholding soldier who decided to lease his property, choosing not to inhabit and cultivate it himself. "Settled" soldiers are therefore a special category of smallholding soldiers.

"Peasant" soldier is appropriate to the extent that the population of the empire may be divided into two groups, peasants and aristocrats. And yet, while it may be reasonable to place a smallholding soldier within the peasant class for the simple reason that he was not a privileged aristocrat, he need not actually have been a peasant, that is, in the simplest sense, a cultivator of the soil. This distinction has been recognized by the many scholars that regard the expression "peasant soldier," with its evocative allusions to Cincinnatus, as misleading in a Byzantine context. Only in societies whose members bore a universal military obligation did soldiers themselves farm land generally. When military service burdens only part of the population, the military becomes a special caste, who, even if they were not regarded as aristocrats, were distinct from the cultivators of the land. And the expression "enrolled soldier," derived from phrases such as γεγραμμένα ἐν τοῖς στρατιωτικοῖς καταλόγοις, distinguishes the smallholding soldier from the pronioia soldier and the mercenary by emphasizing the former's alleged similarity to the middle Byzantine soldier.¹⁰² But the similarity is only conjectural and, in any event, late Byzantine writers, such as Kantakouzenos (e.g., II, 58), routinely include pronioia soldiers among "those in the military lists," a phrase that seems to have lost much of its technical significance.

Consequently, I have preferred to speak of "smallholding" soldiers, in other words, soldiers that derived their remuneration from their connection to a "small holding." Such a definition *prima facie* excludes mercenaries who, to the extent that they were mercenaries, had no direct connection to land, and pronioia soldiers who, at least as far as we know, held or shared "large" holdings. However, we need to be more precise about what a small holding is, and, just as important, we need a simple way to distinguish small holdings from large holdings.

Defining a "small holding" is no easy matter. Obviously it is (a) a "small" property, but, even if we had abundant figures on property sizes, where should the dividing line be between large and small? While five thousand modioi of arable land

¹⁰²The expression is found in Charanis, "Social Structure," 130 and 134, where it is linked to the Nikaian highlanders.

is clearly a large holding, and fifty certainly a small one, how should we regard a holding of five hundred modioi? A modern researcher would approach this problem by dividing the landowning population into percentiles and looking for natural divisions within the landowning population, something the lack of statistics prevents the Byzantinist from doing. Nevertheless, while comparisons to more recent agrarian systems must be approached with caution, it is interesting to note that in order for a landowner in Bulgaria at the turn of the twentieth century to be in the top four percent of proprietors (a group that held about 26% of the arable land), he merely needed to own more than twenty hectares of arable land (about two hundred modioi).¹⁰³

In order to avoid an arbitrary division between large and small holdings, we might look for other ways of differentiating proprietors that do not rely on statistical information. For example, the most significant division is that formed by the institution of the *paroikia*, so that one might say that (b) a small holding is one held by a *paroikos*. But even though *paroikoi* certainly had small holdings, it is axiomatic that not all small holders were *paroikoi*, nor can we even say that smallholding soldiers all derived their remuneration from properties larger than all or even average *paroikikai staseis*. Then again, one could adopt the practical point of view that a small holding was (c) the property of any landowner who actually worked his land himself. But we cannot be sure that even *paroikoi*, as a rule, actually cultivated all their own land and did not lease portions to others. Perhaps, then, one might qualify this definition by adding that the proprietor had to work any *portion* of his own land. This is a much better definition, but unfortunately it is useless. For one thing, in all but the most obvious cases, it is almost impossible to determine whether any particular proprietor actually cultivated any particular piece of his holding himself. Even for *paroikoi*, it is only an assumption, albeit reasonable, that the members of the household actually worked the land listed with them in a *praktikon*. Are peasant landlords still to be considered “small holders,” or are smallholding landlords still to be considered “peasants”? Most of us would probably answer yes, if they still lived and looked like peasants. And this brings us to a social definition of the “small holding”: (d) a property whose owner lived

within the social milieu of the peasantry, in other words, the holdings of a proprietor who, regardless of his wealth, condition of servitude, and daily labors, spent his time, lived, and married among the peasantry.

Finally, there is the fiscal definition, according to which a small holding is (e) one whose owner was not the recipient of fiscal privileges, such as the possession of *paroikoi* and tax exemptions, granted on an individual basis by an emperor. The great advantage of this definition is that it allows us to make a more or less clear-cut distinction between small holders and large landowners simply on the basis of fiscal data, the information we possess in greatest abundance.¹⁰⁴ Thus, a landowner that received any kind of personal grant, gift, or privilege from the emperor was a large landowner, and he who did not was a small holder. Since one could say that such privileges made one an aristocrat, there was a correlation and interrelation between social and fiscal status. And so, while I suppose that there may have been large landowners, even in the fourteenth century, that held no fiscal exemptions, as well as some smaller landowners that held *paroikoi* (and perhaps an entire category of “middle holders” whose definition I shall leave to others), on the whole, this distinction between privileged and non-privileged proprietors provides a methodologically sound and, most important, a practical means of identifying the small holding.

Accordingly, based on such a definition of a small holding, I would define the smallholding soldier as a soldier whose remuneration was based on a personal relationship to a specific property, but whose claim to this remuneration did not proceed from an individual benefaction bestowed by an emperor. The *remuneration* could be in the form of either cash or agricultural produce. The *relationship* to the property could be based on habitation, cultivation, ownership, or, more broadly, any direct relationship to the person that inhabited, owned, or cultivated the property. However, it must be a *personal* relationship in the sense that the soldier was connected to a definable, *specific* property. The *property* itself could be any combination of movable and immovable instruments of production. The phrase *individual benefaction* is necessary

¹⁰³ B. Nedeljković, *Istorija baštinske svojine u novoj Srbiji od kraja 18. veka do 1931* (Belgrade, 1936), 293–94; the figures for Serbia at that time, while incomplete, are comparable.

¹⁰⁴ In a similar fashion, the legal historian Taranovski, *Istorija srpskog prava*, 49–51, distinguished “free, small, allodial peasants” (*slobodni sitni baštinići seljaci*) in medieval Serbia from large landlords (*vlastela*) on the basis of the privileges only the latter received.

to include policy decisions involving bulk or blanket, impersonal grants to groups of people, but to exclude personal imperial grants to the soldier or his forebears.

This is a fiscal and economic definition that takes into account the four examples of smallholding soldiers that I have presented, and also leaves open several possible variations in the fiscal and economic arrangements of smallholding soldiers that, while logical, remain unattested. For example, there is the interesting possibility that some small holders of allodial lands received, administratively, a conditional tax exemption (*exkousseia*) in return for future military service. Further, this definition does not require the smallholding soldier to have been the actual cultivator of the land involved; he could have leased it to others to work. Nor does it require that the smallholding soldier personally inhabited the property from which his livelihood was derived.

Nor is it even necessary that the smallholding soldier owned or even possessed the property in question. It is easy to imagine the situation arising by which a property burdened with a military obligation did not produce an actual soldier from among the members of the household that held the property. The property holder then finds a proxy, perhaps a relative not associated with the household or simply an acquaintance, to perform the required military service. This scenario, alluded to earlier when referring to possible divisions of labor within the known communities of smallholding soldiers, is unattested in the late period, but it parallels the distinction often made between the middle Byzantine *stratiōtēs* and *strateuomenos*, respectively, the man that bore (or whose landholding bore) the military burden, and the man that actually performed the required service. Thus, my definition of the smallholding soldier embraces soldiers that held their own small holdings, as well as soldiers that, by proxy, fulfilled the military obligations of men that held small holdings burdened with a military obligation.

The definition is adequate to exclude those who were strictly mercenaries, because the salary of these was not derived from any *particular* property. It also excludes the majority of pronioia soldiers. There is no need to be concerned with the actual annual, economic value of pronioiai, nor to place them within the late Byzantine economic spectrum. It really does not matter how large or small the annual income of a pronioia was, as long as it was granted through an individual, personal act of

an emperor. It is self-evident that any man, regardless of his social or economic status, whose livelihood was established by the direct, individual, and personal intervention of the emperor was neither a peasant nor a "small holder." Rather, he was a special, privileged individual.

Yet, there were pronioia soldiers who seem to have received their pronioiai through grants that were not individualized, personal acts of an emperor. These are the collective pronioia soldiers, such as the Klazomenitai soldiers of Serres, who in 1342 received a chrysobull granting each of them hereditary title to a fiscal income (*posotēs*) of ten or twelve hyperpyra of the pronioia that the group shared.¹⁰⁵ At the moment I am not concerned with the true economic power that corresponded to these ten and twelve hyperpyra, or even whether these apparently modest sums represented the total posotes of each soldier's share of the pronioia (for which I have my doubts), but rather, the only important point is whether their pronioia was bestowed on them individually, making them privileged landholders and aristocrats. The answer is clearly no. Even though the privileges they were granted in 1342 were issued through a chrysobull and thus formally constituted a personal act of an emperor, the grant was bestowed impersonally and to anonymous soldiers (the Klazomenitai are not named).¹⁰⁶ In other words, its recipients had a social status not noticeably higher than, say, a group of peasant villagers that received an imperial writ lowering their taxes.

Nevertheless, the Klazomenitai soldiers do not fit my definition of a smallholding soldier, because they derived their remuneration from property held jointly, and so each of them did not derive his income from a specific property. Thus, my definition of the smallholding allows us to exclude collective pronioia soldiers such as the Klazomenitai, as well as all other known instances of collective pronioia. In any event one could make a case that there is something inappropriate about regarding any grant of "incorporeal rights," which a pronioia often was, as a "holding" at all, as if, from a mere

¹⁰⁵ *Schatzkammer*, no. 16 = P. Lemerle, *Actes de Kuthumus*, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1988), no. 20.

¹⁰⁶ Similarly, no names are found in the documents relating to the other two groups of collective pronioia soldiers: the Varvaranoi soldiers (see Oikonomidēs, "Compagnies," 360–63) and the soldiers from the company of Judge of the Army Sgouros (unpublished, Dölger, *Regesten*, no. 3084; I wish to thank the Centre d'histoire et civilisation du monde byzantin of the Collège de France for providing me with access to a photograph of the relevant documents).

economic point of view, it could be compared to a peasant holding (*paroikikē stasis*).

And yet, it would not require more than a few twists in the institution of smallholding soldiers to create serious difficulties in distinguishing them from collective pronoia soldiers. For example, what if the Cumans settled by Vatatzes organized themselves communally, holding and working their lands or flocks jointly, and dividing the produce between households and soldiers in accord with some customary arrangement? Perhaps a single glance at such a community would be sufficient to conclude that they were not collective pronoia soldiers. And yet, aside from the obvious fact that the imperial act creating their community had to be different from the kind of document creating collective pronoia soldiers, it would be difficult to amend my definition to include these Cumans, hypothetically so organized, and to exclude the collective pronoia soldiers.

Indeed there is something very similar about collective pronoia soldiers and smallholding soldiers. In some cases, the two types of soldiers could be practically identical. For another example, and one that does not require exotic rules regarding property ownership, let us consider two imaginary propertyless peasants, George and Michael, who became soldiers. One day they heard that a campaign army was passing by their village. Looking for an opportunity to improve their prospects, they went to meet it, and each found himself in a different division of poorly armed, untrained peasants. Nevertheless, both George and Michael and their comrades in each division conducted themselves admirably in battle, and when the campaign had concluded, an imperial officer addressed each division of peasants. To George and his fellows, he offered parcels of land for cultivation, along with tax exemption, in return for continued service as a real soldier. To Michael and his comrades, the imperial officer granted a block of tax revenues from a particular village, also in return for continued military service. Both George and Michael and their comrades accepted the propositions made to them and became soldiers. Michael and his comrades moved themselves and their families to a town, where they lived when not off somewhere fighting. Twice a year one of the men in Michael's group went to the village assigned to them, collected the tax revenues, and brought it to the others who divided it among themselves. As for George and his comrades, with arable land now in their possession, they tried for

a time to live on it and raise their own crops. But soon they found that the demands of military service (which always seemed to interfere with harvesting) made it difficult for them to actually cultivate the land themselves (and, in any event, their wives preferred to live in town), and so they decided to lease their properties to paroikoi. Twice a year one of George's comrades visited the village, collected the rents, and brought the money to town, where it was distributed proportionately to George and the other soldiers. George was a smallholding soldier, and Michael was a collective pronoia soldier. Is there any real difference between them? As far as I can tell, these soldiers, from an economic, fiscal, and social point of view, could easily be indistinguishable, especially in later generations. The only difference between the two types of soldiers would be in the documentation used for each grant.

Certainly one could add elements to each scenario that would establish a clear difference between our imaginary George and Michael, and so by no means am I asserting there was or ever had to be an equivalence between the smallholding soldier and the collective pronoia soldier. I am suggesting only that there are some circumstances that fit our limited knowledge of the characteristics of both types of soldier. The question is whether this blurring of the distinction between smallholding soldiers and collective pronoia soldiers is due simply to our lack of adequate knowledge of the details of each institution, or whether, as the application of the concept of pronoia evolved, there was a real tendency for the institution of pronoia to embrace forms of remuneration that had been distinct in previous periods. The latter possibility could explain why the historians so rarely distinguish pronoia from other kinds of non-cash grants. Indeed, from what we know of military policies during the fourteenth century, it is quite possible, as N. Oikonomides ("Compagnies," 357) has suggested, that the institution of collective pronoia may have been supplanting that of the smallholding soldier. Moreover, the parallel between the joint pronoia of collective pronoia soldiers and the communal settlement of smallholding soldiers may have led to the eventual classification of both types of grants as "pronoia" regardless of their origin.

Many questions regarding smallholding soldiers cannot yet be answered. For example, we do not know whether the land from which the smallhold-

ing soldier derived his livelihood generally was encumbered with a tax burden or received an *exkousseia*. Nor do we know whether it was the rule for at least the families of the smallholding soldier to work such land themselves, or whether, as in my imaginary example, it could be leased for a rent. The most tantalizing is whether individual smallholding soldiers existed, men that owned and farmed individually granted plots of arable land and were not associated with a community or colony of other, similar soldiers. In contrast to the artificial colonies created by late Byzantine emperors, I have found no such "organic" arrangement of smallholding soldiers, that is, no obligation of military service that, through men or through property, had its origin prior to 1204. And so, while it remains logical to think that there were some soldiers (as well as guards, I might add) that received tax exemption on their land on condition of service, the thought remains in the realm of mere conjecture. With the important exception, of course, of certain pronoiars, I know of no example from the late Byzantine period in which it is certain that a man had received tax exemption in return for personal military or paramilitary services.

It could be argued that the institution of smallholding soldiers was useful to the state for two reasons. First, smallholding soldiers were less of a drain on the fisc than mercenaries. After the initial land grant, the only expenses incurred by the treasury were for rations, at least for those associated with the navy. Of the groups cited only the Tzakones, as far as we know, received regular pay in addition to their land grants. Second, of the three primary types of soldiers (pronoiar, mercenary, smallholding), smallholding soldiers had the strongest attachment to the land. This made them good defensive troops who, in theory at least, could have been planted on whatever ground needed to be defended.

Nevertheless, it can easily be shown that smallholding soldiers were clearly not the warriors of choice among late Byzantine emperors. Only two emperors, as far as we can tell for sure, created smallholding soldiers, John Vatatzes and Michael Palaiologos, and both created such soldiers for reasons that were not based entirely on military requirements. Vatatzes' decision to make the Cumans into smallholding soldiers was as much an attempt to avert a potential disaster by finding something to do with thousands of newly subjected semi-civilized peoples. Michael VIII's creation of the Thelematarioi was a means of rewarding the

men that had helped him retake Constantinople and, just as important, of maintaining the political support of the inhabitants in the area around the City, and his transplantation of the Tzakones was partly undertaken to repopulate the capital. Only the creation of the Prosalentai seems to have had little but military need at its heart.

Significantly, the Prosalentai, as rowers, required less training and equipment than the other groups of smallholding soldiers, and this points to some of the problems inherent within the institution of smallholding soldiers. It is no accident that the examples of smallholding soldiers that I have described all fall into the light-armed category of warrior. Giving a soldier land, and asking him or his family or even his neighbors to work his fields will not yield sufficient income to produce the kind of soldier the state most wanted, heavily armed cavalry. And evidence derived from the *praktika* of pronoiar soldiers shows that it required at least several households of paroikoi and thousands of modioi of arable land to produce one such soldier.¹⁰⁷

Further, how would one go about dismissing a smallholding soldier? A mercenary could be denied his salary, and, with a bit more effort, a pronoiar soldier could be denied his revenues. Both were essentially fiscal acts. But to fire a smallholding soldier and refuse him his remuneration meant taking away his land, at best an awkward affair. Even more troublesome is the problem of the smallholding soldier household that could not produce a fit soldier, an issue with which students of middle Byzantine military lands have had to wrestle.

I think there are two reasons why smallholding soldiers appear so rarely in the sources of late Byzantium. First, as the professional soldiers lowest in prestige (surpassing only the non-professional peasant bands and servants accompanying armies), the historians preferred not to dwell upon them, and instead, to focus on the more glorious exploits of native pronoiar soldiers and Latin mercenaries, both of whom tended to serve as heavy cavalry. Of the four groups Pachymeres tells us about, Gregoras mentions only two of them, the Cumans and the Tzakones, even though he used Pachymeres' history when composing his own work. In the portion of Gregoras' history where he takes up the story on his own without Pachymeres' help, there is no mention of any smallholding sol-

¹⁰⁷ I am speaking of the documents in *Xénophon*, nos. 15 and 16, and in P. Schreiner, "Zwei unedierte Praktika aus der zweiten Hälfte des 14. Jahrhunderts," *JÖB* 19 (1970), 37–39.

diers, even in the abstract, though the Thelematarioi and Prosalentai certainly existed well into the fourteenth century, and the two thousand Cumans lent by Milutin and then settled in Thrace toward 1320 may even have formed a new group. And from a reading of Kantakouzenos, one would get no idea that there was such a thing as smallholding soldiers in late Byzantium. Perhaps the superficial similarity of the pronioia and the smallholding soldier permitted the historians, especially Kantakouzenos, to lump them both conveniently together under the rubric of those that held "incomes from lands."

Nevertheless, the frequency with which the historians describe the unruly, ineffectual, or counterproductive actions of the untrained and undisciplined elements within the army indicates that the low status of smallholding soldiers alone cannot explain the historians' reluctance to deal with them. It is not easy to escape the conclusion that smallholding soldiers were never more than a special element within the late Byzantine military.

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